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MORAL USES OF DARK THINGS

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BY

HORACE BUSHNELL

LITERARY VARIETIES

II

Centenary Edition

NEW YORK
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
1910

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1881

EDITOR'S PREFACE TO THE EDITION OF 1881

Of the three volumes by Dr. Bushnell now produced under the general title of "Literary Varieties" two have long been out of print and one is new. The latter, "Building Eras in Religion," consists of various articles and addresses which have been printed in some fugitive form, and which Dr. Bushnell himself designated under the heading of Reliquiæ as the material for a book to be published after his death. Grouping these three books together now as a collection of his miscellaneous writings, we would emphasize the distinction between these and his theological works, these "the spontaneous overplus and literary by-play of a laborious profession," the latter the embodiment of that profession itself. They so richly represent and, as it were, personify the varied interests of his life as to form in themselves, if rightly interpreted, a biography necessary to the completeness of any which has been or could be written. As an aid to such interpretation, a few facts and thoughts may here be fitly presented.

The oration on Work and Play, often spoken of as the supreme literary product of his life, followed closely upon a profound private religious experience and was written and delivered in that year of theologic tempest which threatened to overwhelm him as a heretic. But its atmosphere is serene, the high tenor of its literary inspiration unbroken by a note of strife. His ideal of a literary era painted in its closing pages seems to be that it shall emerge from a period of struggle under a religious impulse, as his own had done. The same thought is conveyed with equal force and beauty in his address on "Our Obligations to the Dead," in the volume on "Building Eras in Religion," wherein he depicts the future literary age for which the great struggle of our war has, he thinks, furnished fit training and noble subjects, religion being still "the only sufficient fertilizer of genius as it is the only real emancipator of man."

In the first volume, Work and Play, we have the "Age of Homespun," which contains the scenery and the *dramatis personæ* of his childhood; "The Growth of Law," in which we find the impress of his law studies; "The Founders Great in their Unconsciousness," wherein the strength of his own hereditary Puritan consciousness is revealed; "The Day of Roads," the direct product of his European journey; "City Plans," so closely connected with his work for Hartford and its Park; and "Religious Music," whose melodious thought and rhythmical style seem to date back to that time when, as a boy, he taught himself by a reverse process from his mother's song how to read music. One address on "Agriculture at the East" has been withdrawn, as superseded by the progress of history, and in its place we have now that on "Barbarism the First Danger," the first public address by which he became widely known. Its truths were unpopular truths—needed, but unwelcome to the sensitiveness of new communities. As long as we have a frontier the article may be useful.

These articles, taken all together, evince a large amount of reading and study. Apart from the references to historical works, many of which were consulted in preparation for certain subjects, we find everywhere evidences that his mind was keenly alive to the inspirations of the great thought-makers, from Plato and Epictetus down to Bacon and Shakespeare. Books of systematized thought were less attractive to him than those in which thought is offered in free and fluent forms, capable of transmutation. The works of scientists and travelers, whose subject-matter is necessarily in the concrete, had special value to his mind as offering food for thought. He read more than is commonly believed, largely of books by the few master-minds, but also freely of the best present writers,—very little of metaphysical or philosophical books.

The volume on the "Moral Uses of Dark Things" is not, as might be supposed, a logical treatise designed to solve the enigmas of life, but a series of observations made in a curious and inquiring spirit upon some of the strange and mysterious provisions of creation. It was as early as the year 1846 that Dr. Bushnell first had his attention called to some of these morally unaccountable aspects of human life and nature, and he then preached sermons on the uses of deformity and of physical danger. From time to time he observed new phases of the same riddle, and tore the disguise of a curse from many a blessing. At last he consolidated the fruit of his observations in our second volume, a subtle and curious contribution to the thought of the time, but one so unpretending of system as to be properly classified with his "Literary Varieties."

In the fact that the material of the third volume, entitled "Building Eras in Religion," was selected by Dr. Bushnell himself as that which he was willing to have stand when he was gone, we have his indorsement of it as being not inconsistent with his ripest thought. Notwithstanding this the articles were some of them among his earliest, as the date given with each will show.

It is through these three volumes that he will be best known to the world in his personality as a man. They are both flower and fruit, and not only illustrate but *are* the growth, the ceaseless activity, the ever-varying form of life in one of the most living of men.

EDITOR.

1881.

Since the above was written another book, "The Spirit in Man," has been published (1903), a book which also contains much of miscellaneous material.

EDITOR.

1903.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

IT would have been easy to construct a treatise on the general subject presented in these essays, and there was a considerable temptation to do it, in the fact that our treatises of Natural Theology are so commonly at fault, in tracing what they call their "argument from design"—assuming that Physical Uses are the decisive tests, or objects, of all the contrivance to be looked for in God's works. Whereas they are resolvable, in far the greater part, by no such tests, but only by their Moral Uses, which are, in fact, the last ends of God in every thing, including even his Physical Uses themselves. Still the defect here specified will as easily be corrected by these essays, on so many promiscuous topics, as by a regular treatise, and they have the advantage of being each a subject by itself. And, to secure this advantage, they are thrown together in a manner as neglectful of system as possible. They do not make a book to be read in course, but a book to be taken up as the moods of the mind, and the rising of this or that question, may prepare an affinity for them. For there is scarcely a year that passes without somehow recalling every one of these topics, or topics closely related, in a manner that prepares to new interest, or awakens fresh curiosity.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
I.—Of Night and Sleep	7
II.—Of Want and Waste	29
III.—Of Bad Government	52
IV.—Of Oblivion, or Dead History	73
V.—Of Physical Pain	95
VI.—Of Physical Danger	120
VII.—Of the Conditions of Solidarity	142
VIII.—Of Non-Intercourse between Worlds	165
IX.—Of Winter	188
X.—Of Things Unsightly and Disgustful	210
XI.—Of Plague and Pestilence	232
XII.—Of Insanity	249
XIII.—Of the Animal Infestations	274
XIV.—Of Distinctions of Color	296
XV.—Of the Mutabilities of Life	319
XVI.—Of the Sea	344

MORAL USES
OF
DARK THINGS.

I.

OF NIGHT AND SLEEP.

In proposing a series of articles on the moral uses of things, particularly the dark things of the world, I assume the reality of final causes without argument. Our pantheistic literature, and many of our late philosophers, it is well known, disallow final causes altogether, treating them in fact with disrespect, as being only feeble and fond conceits that have amused the fancy of religious people heretofore, but are now to be dismissed. I do not write for such. But what we all see with our eyes I think I have some right to assume, namely, that this whole frame of being is bedded in Mind. Matter itself is not more evident than the mind that shapes it, fills it, and holds it in training for its uses. Philosophy itself, call it positive or by any other name, is possible only in the fact, that the world is cognate with mind and cast in the molds of intelligence. And then, as it belongs inherently to mind that it must have its ends, the All-Present mind must have reference to ends, and the whole system of causes must at bottom be, exactly as we see it to be, a system of final causes. That the philosophers discard them ought, accordingly, to cost us no concern, for they have a wondrously copious ability to assert themselves; which they have kept on doing and will, rolling in their tidal sweep of conviction from every point of time, and all structural things, and organic workings of the creation. Speculation can as well keep out the sea.

The dark things of which I am to speak are such, in general, as have some relation more or less perceptible to, or connection with, Moral Evil, which is, in fact, the the night-side of the creation. All the enigmas and lowering difficulties we meet are shadows from this; for it is to meet the conditions and prepare the discipline of this, that so many rough, unseemly kinds of furniture are required. Pursuing the logical method, I ought, therefore, to begin with an introductory chapter on moral evil itself, or, at least, on the uses of that probational training of liberty that involves so great peril, and the certainty of such unspeakable disaster. But I prefer, on the whole, not to observe the logical method, lest, by seeming to be engaged in the heavy work of a treatise, I make all the subjects heavy and dry in proportion. They have each an interest more fresh and peculiar when taken by itself. I propose to call them up, therefore, in a perfectly miscellaneous way, taking the lighter and less troublesome, and the darker and more difficult—those which lie in nature and its appointments, those which lie in the fortunes of individual and social experience, and those which relate to the scheme of Providence—without regard to order, and as mere convenience may direct. In this way I propose, for the present article, a subject not generally felt to be at all dark or difficult, and only just over the line, when it is more closely and thoughtfully considered, namely, *Night and Sleep.*

I put the two together because they are so closely related, one being a fact of external nature, provided for in the astronomic appointments of nature, the other being a corresponding appointment of our psychological system itself, only somewhat more absolute than the other. For, within the polar circles, the astronomic night is continuous for six long months, while the psychological necessities of sleep maintain their period unchanged, and the human populations are obliged to seize a night about once in twenty-four hours, when no such night is provided by the diurnal revolutions. In which we see that our human body and mind have a night appointment in them, more unvarying and fixed than the planetary night itself. So that if we raise the question whether our psychologic nature is timed by the planetary order, or the planetary order timed to fit our psychologic nature, we are thrown upon the latter supposition, by the fact that our sleep has reasons more absolute and more inherent than the reasons even of the astronomic order itself. Still the night we have without, and the night we inherently want, are really coincident, in all the more habitable parts of the earth

But if the question be, why it is, either that any such institution of night is appointed, or any such want as sleep prescribed, we encounter some difficulty. As regards the former, it is no sufficient answer to say that the revolution of the earth, turning it away just half the time from the sun, creates a night by astronomic necessity; for the astronomic system might, perhaps, have been differently organized, or so as to maintain a perpetual day; every habitable orb, for example, having for its sun a vast concave orb shining perpetually round it, and creating neither night, nor shadow, nor region of polar cold. As regards the latter, too, the want of rest and sleep, it does not appear that our body and mind might not both have been so organized as to be capable of perpetual action, without either exhaustion or weariness. And since we are put here, not for rest, but for action, by that only winning the required character, and becoming what is given us to be, why are we not made capable of sleepless activity? If our errand here is the trial and training of our liberty, we are neither being tried nor trained, when our very liberty itself is sunk in a state of unconsciousness. Such a state wants relativity, we might say, to the errand on which we are sent, and the time thus occupied is lost time. And when the creation puts out its lights and commands us away into a state of oblivion, what is that oblivion but a state in which we are to drop, and even forget, our errand?

Besides, there will appear to many to be something fearful and forbidding in the expression of darkness.

Children are commonly afraid of the dark, and even Holy Scripture makes the state of "outer darkness" an image of all that is most terrible in God's retributions. And what shall we say of that mental and bodily state in which the senses are shut up, and reason itself gone out, and nothing left of a nature so high in dignity but a mere palpitating clod? What do we say of one who habitually drowns his higher nature in a similar condition of stupefaction by the excesses of intemperance? And if this be a crime, as it is by the general consent of mankind, is it not remarkable that half the world's population is, all the while, laid prostrate and senseless, by a soporific planned for, in the economy both of heaven and of their own bodies?

Besides, night is itself the opportunity of crime, and we even speak of crimes in a general way as being deeds of darkness.

> "Oh treacherous night!
> Thou lendest thy ready vail to every treason,
> And teeming mischiefs thrive beneath thy shade."

Incendiaries, thieves, robbers, assassins, go to their deeds under shelter of the night, and even prefer a specially dark night. Adulteries are stolen pleasures of the night. It is in the night that great conspiracies are hatched. Where crimes are committed by day, the absconding is commonly by night. And there is still another reason for this crowding of crime into the dark hours, in the fact that the world is then asleep, and the particular victims selected will then be locked in a state of unconsciousness—inobservant as in death itself, and passive to whatever wrong will make them its prey. Since the world, then, is made, as we know it to be, for the trial of creatures who will be in wrong, why is it made to cover wrong-doing a full half of the time, and furnish it an opportunity so convenient? Or, if we must be creatures of sleep, why is it that the law of sleep is not made absolute upon all, so that the bad shall be taken into custody by it, as the innocent and good are made defenseless by it? for then the nights could settle down upon the world as times of truce for all wrong-doing. When, too, we create a special police for the night, what is the implication, but that we impeach the care of Providence by proposing to supply one of its considerable defects ourselves? As if it belonged to us to assume the defense of innocence, now that Providence has taken away its shield!

Is there not, also, another deed of darkness, not commonly so named, but thought of with eminent respect, and which, partly for that reason, is, morally speaking, more harmful? I refer to the untimely shows and bewildering dissipations of what is called fashionable society. It is very true that we do not want the whole twelve hours for sleep. And the evening, after the great works of the day are finished, is a time favorable above all others to the genuine pleasures of society. But this is not the way of those who rule the mode and claim the chief honors of society. It is not the faces and voices of friends, or the lively cheer of intellectual and social play, that meets their idea; they are commonly incapable of any so fine sort of pleasure. They do not so much care to be freshened, as to be in figure. Naturalness they despise, and the more artificially got up every thing may be for the desired show, the better. Their time must be taken against nature; for society, they think, would be a tame affair, submitted to the appointments of astronomy. And what so fit time, or time so finely exclusive, is there, as when the common world is stilled in sleep? By the brilliancy of their lights, and by figures floating in dress and glittering in gems, can they not make a show more dazzling than day? Entertainment is the same thing as expense, and a crowd they call society. Their time begins just where the evening ends, and the throng disperses for sleep, when sleep might better end. The young men and women of sixty—for, in this high tier of fashion, it is not permissible to be old—are too bitterly fagged and jaded to sleep, and the really young have their heads too full of excitement. Sleep, at least, is long in coming, and comes more as a fever than as a refreshment. At length, when the dew is dried up and every bird is wearied with its song, the young frivolity, be it man or woman, rises to begin another day. The brain is sore; the day is dull or only enlivened by fretfulness. There is no relish for either business or study, and no capacity for it; and where the dissipation is frequent, no habit of order and right industry can survive. Life will become as trivial as it is artificial.

What substitute would have been sought, if no such opportunity of night had been given, we can not pretend to say; but this we sufficiently know, that no kind of substitute could produce a more wide-spread, practically immense demoralization, in the same high circles of life. It changes, in fact, the general cast of society. There is, besides, no mode of character so heartless and false and cruel, as that of high fashion, or so totally opposite to all the noblest, best ends of living.

Going on from this point, now, to speak of the moral uses of night and sleep, we have it, first of all, to say, as regards the bad opportunities they give, that such opportunities are not bad, but are only made so by the abuses of wrong; for what best thing is there which wrong may not abuse? The very system of moral liberty supposes that wrong is going to have, or at least, make, its opportunities. And since we are all in wrong as being under evil, how shall we be made to understand more impressively what is in all wrong, than when we and society are its victims? We are put in moral society, in fact, to act and be acted upon as in terms of duty—existing alone, no terms of duty would be given—and a great part of the benefit is to be, that we get revelations of wrong, and become so revolted by it as to be turned away from it. And what revelations can be more effective than to see it stealing upon innocence in deeds of midnight robbery and murder, showing how cruel and cowardly and detestably mean it is; or to see it crowding society out of heaven's times, and turning it into a pageant of the night, as remote as possible from the sobrieties of reason, and the sweet simplicity of virtue?

2 Consider, next, how differently tempered a realm of bad minds becomes, under the ordinance of night and sleep, from what it otherwise would be. Always fresh and strong, incapable of exhaustion as the spring of a watch, moral ideas would seldom get near enough to be felt. Evil is proud, stiffening itself always against the restrictions of God, and trying to be God itself. Therefore only a little modicum of capacity is given it, which runs out in a single day. After twelve or sixteen hours, the man that rose in the morning, full of might, as if a young eternity were in him, begins to flag, his nervous energy is spent, his limbs are heavy, his motions want spirit and precision. If he tries, for some particular reason, to hold on over whole days, his hands grow weaker, his eyelids more heavy, till, at length, he is obliged to resign himself to his fate, and drops, a merely unconscious lump, on the couch of the sleeper. Every day this lesson of frailty is given him. The grass that is cut down by the mower's scythe does not sooner wither and dry up, than the strength of the mower himself. We take our very capacity thus in little loans of only a few hours, and when the time has gone, we fall back into God's bosom again to be recruited. Were it not for this wise and morally beautiful arrangement, we might be as stiff in wrong as so many evil angels.

Having only this short run of power, we are humbled to a softer key. We do not feel or act as we should, if we could rush on our way and have our sin as a law of ceaseless momentum, for the whole period of our life. For we are like an engine that is started off on the track by itself; the fuel and water will soon be exhausted, and then it must stop. But, if it could go on without fuel or water, it would even whirl itself across a continent and pitch itself into the sea. So, if, being loose in evil, we could rush interminably on, never to be spent or recruited by sleep, our bad momentum would itself drive us on, till we are hurried by the goal of life itself. We should be hard in our self-will beyond conception; our very ambitions and purposes would fly, bullet-wise, at their mark; consideration, conciliation, candor, patience, would all be driven out of the world by the remorseless persistency of our habit. Happily it is not so. We are stopped every few hours and brought to nothingness. Perhaps we do not say that we are made little, but, what is far better, we practically are so to ourselves, whether we think it or not; for feeling is often truer than thought, and takes the type of fact when thought does not. We are not bad gods or demons in our impetuosity, but men, men that go to sleep as children do and must. Being spaced off in this manner by stoppages, we consent to limits. We are softened and gentled in feeling, more perhaps than we would like to be. It is difficult not to be sometimes tender. Reason will sometimes get a chance to speak, and sometimes even preaching will meet a fair possibility. The tremendous passion for gain, and, speaking more inclusively, all that belongs to the world-spirit, and the spell it works in minds under evil, is broken every few hours by the counter-spell of sleep, and so the infatuation is restricted. So that, having this appointment in it, we can see that God has prepared even the world itself to be a corrector of worldliness. Even the astronomic revolutions he sets running as a mill against it. He buries the world in darkness that we may not see it. He takes the soul off into a world of unconsciousness and dream to break up its bad enchantment. He palsies the hand to make it let go, palsies even the brain to stifle its infatuations. Were it not for this I verily believe that what we call the world would get to be a kind of demoniacal possession.

In the same way all the various malignities of evil passion are either extirpated or greatly softened. After some years, prejudices begin to be tired of being slept over. Jealousies rankle as long as they stay, but they get tired of staying, when we do not stay with them, but go to sleep over them. We can not hate an enemy save intermittently, but have to begin again every morning—which we have less and less appetite for, and finally come to like that morning best which does not begin at all. Were it not for this arrangement, our malignities might burn us up. But the taking away of our consciousness is a kind of compulsory Sabbath, or truce of God. No hatred burns in the unconscious man. No revenge or jealousy lowers on his face in that soft hour of oblivion. If he went to bed heated by an ugly conversation, if he was severe and bitter in his judgments, if all charities were scorched away by his fierce denunciations, he will rise in the morning cool and sweet as the morning, and the gentle cheer of his voice will show that he is clear of his bad mood, and likes to have it known. A man must be next to a devil who wakes angry. After his unconscious Sabbath he begins another day, and every day is Monday. How beautifully thus are we drawn, by this kind economy of sleep, to the exercise of all good dispositions! The acrid and sour ingredients of evil, the grudges, the wounds of feeling, the hypochondriac suspicions, the black torments of misanthropy, the morose fault-findings, are so far tempered and sweetened by God's gentle discipline of sleep, that we probably do not even conceive how demoniacally bitter they would be, if no such kind interruptions broke their spell.

It is also a great thing for us, as regards the interest and right ordering of life, that we are made into chapters in this manner, and are not left to that tedious kind of way which we sometimes find in a book that goes on to its end without headings of transition, or resting-places of cessation. We go by dates and days, and a year is three hundred and sixty-five chapters of life. By these dates we remember ourselves, and without them could scarcely remember ourselves at all. Time itself would only be whisked away, as the trees are when we are whirled through a forest. And so we should have as little note of the present as memory of the past. It is not so when we come to the end of a day and stop. In one view it is a complete chapter, and we ourselves are substantially ended with it. Then, having passed away into the nowhere of sleep, we come out new-born in the morning—other and yet the same—-to begin another more advanced chapter. The waking-point is different from the point where we vanished; and it is one of the pleasant things we think of, that to-day is going to be different from yesterday. If we really thought it was going to be the same day over again, we should be mortally sick of it in advance. No, we are going to do something, set on something, have or obtain something, in advance of what belonged to yesterday. And why not something better, best of all, wisest and holiest? We do not always ask that question, but the fresh life of our new morning has at least some better affinity in it, as the flowers that have blossomed in the night are more fragrant than the old ones that have, all, the smell of yesterday in them. Not every morning is God's morning thus in the soul; but how much closer is that holier dawn to feeling, and easier to be conceived, for the new-born life that has opened so many chapters of morning experience. As one day of the year is certain to be Christmas, there ought to be some day in such a calendar of days when Christ is born to the soul—a sublime Anno Domini, at which all after-dates begin.

Sleep also greatly enlarges our mental experience, giving us a different sense of ourselves and our immortal capabilities. I make nothing of the argument from sleep and a return to consciousness in waking, for the fact of a resurrection and a future life. The faith of immortality depends on a sense of it begotten, not on an argument for it concluded. And here is the office of sleep, that it wakens the sense, while it does not furnish the argument. It is just that kind of experience that makes us, I might almost say, completely other and different to ourselves. If our life were a continuous waking state, fifty or seventy years long, having light and day to correspond, it might be difficult to say what we should be, but we certainly should not be what we are. Our sleep is not only a great mystery to philosophers, but a practical mystery to all men, even such as never had a thought of it. We are carried by it into a new world, as distinct from that of our waking hours as if our spirit were translated. The body is alive only as a vegetable lives; the senses are closed, the soul itself is unconscious, displaying yet its incapacity to cease from action. The thoughts fly as swiftly as when we are awake, and sometimes a great deal farther and higher; we remember, imagine, hope, fear, hurrying on through this and unknown worlds, creating scenes of glory and pain, shuddering in perils, exulting in deliverances, all unreal, yet for the time reality itself. The immortal element strives on, incapable of cessation, determined never to cease; displaying its inherent, essential, self asserting eternity. And so we become, as it were, a different self, that we may know the self we are; for if we make as little of our dreams or sleep-thoughts as we may, they do, at least, show us the fearfully sublime activity of our nature, that must still act, when we have no longer any will to action. What a discovery is it thus to a child. when first he begins to reach after the distinction of a dream! He has been somewhere, he knows not where; he has seen strange people, he knows not who: only the vanishing smiles and dimples playing on his face told more of the paradise he was in, hearing their sweet voices and looking on their beautiful faces, than he can even begin to stammer about when he wakes. If he was unwell or overcharged with food, he has probably fared differently; bad creatures have chased him, strange monsters have made strange noises, ogres have taken him in their teeth. Startled out of sleep, he clings in a tremor to his mother, and when she shows him that there is nobody in the room, that it was only a thought in his head, a dream, what is a dream? At that question he is working visibly for days, till the dream ceases more and more to be a fearful creature, and he begins to imagine that a dream is a kind of nobody or nothing that came out of himself. What a mystery is he thus beginning to be to himself? And just so are we all passing out, so to speak, into this other-world state and returning, as many times as we have seen days, yet knowing nothing of it still, save that we get no understanding at all by our visits. Perhaps we are so dull as never to have had a question about the mystery. No matter, we are none the less altered by it. This double nature, capable of a double existence, is not the same it would be if we made no such excursions into unimagined states and worlds. It is great, greater than we can even think, and reaches farther than we can definitely know. Sleep is a spiritualizer, thus, in the constitution of nature itself. By it the capacity of other modes of existence is made familiar. Saying nothing of the faith of immortality, we get a sense in it of ourselves that very nearly contains that faith. It is scarcely possible, in this view, to overrate the importance of it in the moral training of souls.

Meantime, night as much enlarges the knowledge we get of the world as sleep the knowledge we get of ourselves. Perpetual sunlight and day would have kept us in a very small circle of discovery; for, as the vail of unconsciousness drawn over the soul in sleep reveals the depths of our spiritual nature to itself, and makes it a mystery of vastness and immortal grandeur, so the night of the sphere reveals innumerable other spheres, and peoples the sky with worlds of glory otherwise undiscovered. At this point of possibility all the discoveries of astronomic science begin. And the infinitude of God's realm begins at this point to be felt, apart from all science. We are no more shut in, or cornered, in a small triangle of knowledge, where sun and moon and earth are the mere-stone boundaries of the All; but we go out to look upon, or apprehend, or rather to be apprehended by, a real universe, in God's own measures. And this we do as truly before science begins as after. Enough that we are made to think a real Everywhere. We may fall into no speculations about the population or non-population of these realms; still the sky will mean something like "heaven," or heaven something like that, and the word "celestial" will get a place in all languages for powers divine, and creatures of a supramundane quality. Our moral nature will be raised in order, too, by the sense of its religious affinity with other beings and worlds. This, too, by means of the night —"night unto night showeth forth knowledge."

> "In her starry shade
> Of dim and solitary loveliness,
> I learned the language of another world."

Sometimes we shall be oppressed, no doubt, by this dread immensity of worlds, and fall back into impressions of our insignificance that quite disable us. But it will be a salutary oppressiveness; for the immensity felt is but the type of God, and the sublime purity and order it displays make it only a type the more attractive that it represents our ideals, when the distractions and deformities we meet here below represent only the moral disorder and conscious guilt of our practice. We get an idea thus of God which very nearly asserts itself, and are brought to conceive a glorious unknown society to whom we are somehow related. All the conditions of our moral existence are enlarged and exalted. And this we say, be it observed, not in the sense that we have got arguments to be so used, but in the sense that, being constituted as we are, we are taken by these inevitable impressions, and have them more or less distinctly felt in their practical reality. As tenants of a star-world, we are not the same beings we should be in a world of mere sunlight.

We have still a different kind of benefit in the fact that night and sleep bring us times of revision or moral reflection, such as greatly promote the best uses of existence. To live in a perpetual day, and have what we call the hours of business ceaseless even as the flow of rivers, would leave us no room for reflection. We should be like seas in the trade-winds, never getting still enough to reflect any thing. Our soul would be blind to itself by reason of the perpetual seeing of our eyes. God, therefore, draws a curtain over his light, checks the busy hours of work and the turmoil of trade, and recalls us to moods of silence and meditative thoughtfulness in the depths of our own spirit. Many of us, I know, are sadly indisposed to this, and, in one view, wretchedly incapable of it. Yet, when their day is ended, even such will naturally fall into a different mood. If the day has not gone well, and they are much wearied by its engagements, it will be difficult sometimes not to meet the question, who they are that they should be wrestling in such struggles. It is quite natural, too, for them, going over the day, to ask what, after all, it amounts to. And then it will be strange if they do not sometimes go a little further, and ask whither they are going, on what point moving, in such a life. Deeper and more serious natures, even though sadly imbued with guilt, will be turned almost of course to some kind of review. Another day is gone, its works are ended. Ambition has spent the fever of another day. Pleasure has exhausted her charms. Idleness itself is weary. And now, as the world grows still and excitement dies away, the mind calls off its activity and turns it inward on itself. It hears no call of God, perhaps, and thinks of doing nothing as a duty. But a pause has come, and something it must think of, for it can not stand still. Detained by nothing now on hand, it travels far, and makes a large review. It takes in, as it were by snatches, other worlds. It touches the springs of its own immortal wants, and they answer quick and heavily. Whatever wrong has been committed stalks into the mind with an appalling tread. If God is a subject unwelcome, and guilt another even more unwelcome, the moral nature has so great advantage now, and, withal, so great sensibility, that the door of the soul is held open to things not welcome. All those highest and most piercing truths that most deeply concern the great problem of life will often come nigh to thoughtful men in the dusk of their evenings and their hours of retirement to rest. The night is the judgment bar of the day. About all the reflection there is in the world is due, if not directly to the night, to the habit prepared and fashioned by it.

We sometimes wake, too, in the dead of night, and it must be a very hard man that can read these night-thoughts which are not poems, without being stirred by convictions more or less appalling. The man is still on his pillow, the world is still even to sublimity, the eyes are shut, or at least see nothing if they are open. Perhaps it is some crime that has murdered sleep, and perhaps not. Great thoughts, and wonderfully distinct, crowd in, stirring great convictions—all the more welcome to the good man, to the bad how terrible!

"Thou has visited me in the night," says David, "thou has tried me." And again, "My reins instruct me in in the night-season." What lessons of wisdom have every man's reins given him in the depths of the night! What revelations of thought have come into his mind! things how high, how close to other worlds! reproofs how piercing, in authority how nearly divine!

In all these specifications, it will be seen that I am not looking after any kind of argument for the truths of religion, or the vindication of God, but showing simply how we are attempered, practically, to the best things; that also, perhaps, without knowing it. Night and sleep are not a contrivance to furnish us with thoughts or notions, afterward to be applied to the moral uses of life, but are fomentations rather directly applied, producing, in that manner, modulations of feeling and mitigations of temper, such as quite undemonize our bad affinities. They do it also, it remains to say, in yet another way, still closer to the purposes of religion. It has been a great question with many, whether it is possible to make out any proof of the goodness of God from the mere light of nature. But it matters little whether we can or not, if only we are somehow made to feel that goodness, as we most certainly are, prior to all questions of argument or opinion. And I think it is done more effectually by the institution of sleep than by any thing else. Sleep is the perfectly passive side of our existence, and best prepares us to the sense of whatever is to be got by mere receptivity. In the day we protect ourselves, or at least imagine we do. In the night we can not so much as think of doing it. We are switched off from all self-care, and our very mind runs in grooves not laid by us. Having spent our loan of capacity, we fall back into God's arms to be refitted by him. We sleep in his bosom, even as a child in the bosom of its mother. And this falling asleep, in one view compulsory, has yet, in another, a strange kind of faith in it, in which we consent to drop off the verge of consciousness and be no more ourselves. The gulf we drop into is deep and wild, but we go down trustfully, and there we rest. And this we do every day, coming out as often new created for life's purposes. If we are not religious enough to say, "God giveth his beloved sleep," we do, at least, feel ourselves refreshed by some wondrous benignity somewhere in which we have trusted. Neither does calling that benignity fate at all satisfy us. There is dear good-will in it somewhere, which, if we should name, is God. And we have this feeling of Unknown Benignity the more certainly, that we gave ourselves to it in wrong and conscious ill-desert, which itself comports not with fate, and as little with any feeling but that of some divine goodness.

Besides, we are observers here as well as subjects of experience. We look on a good man's sleep, and there is nothing so beautiful. It is Luther who has worn out his powers in some great fight for God; or it is Washington half deserted by his country when bearing its burdens, and now, forgetting all, he has fallen back into God's arms, to forget also himself. There he lies uncaring, and receiving back, from God's gentle fomentations, the powers that shall furnish another great to-morrow. Standing at the open door of his chamber, and looking on his deep, still sleep, it is as if the eternal, ever faithful Goodness had him now to Himself! And yet more touching and closer to the tenderness of mercy is the very bad man's sleep. He has drunk the cup of guilty pleasure dry. His tongue is weary of blasphemy. His deed of crime, perhaps of blood, is done, and the chapter of his day is ended. Having spent the power God gave him for good in a violation of his throne, he goes remorsefully to his bed, and there forgets even his remorse. But God does not forget him or toss him out of the world, but he rests encircled by the goodness of God, nourished by his patience, to be refitted for to-morrow. Probably he will do just what he has done before, but he shall have his opportunity of good, though many times forfeited; for it is a great part of God's purpose in sleep to renew abused powers; else how many would never sleep again. Therefore, who of us can look on a world buried in sleep, a guilty, ungrateful world, broadly sunk in evil, and do it without some deeply affecting, overwhelming sense of the goodness of God. I say not that all men have it as a thought or opinion, they do not; but they do have it, which is far better, as a feeling, that some unknown benignity inspheres them, call it by whatever name. In this feeling, too, all the most practical uses of life are concentered and made convergent on the bending of the soul to God, in ways of reverence and religion.

II.

OF WANT AND WASTE.

By want, I mean a state of short supply; by waste, a creative lavishment of things that are not utilized, and perhaps never can be. Both meet us together at every turn, as light and shade in the same picture, and they so far belong together, that I shall not feel myself at liberty to part them, any further than it may be necessary, to give them a sufficiently distinct consideration.

Considering that God is a being of infinite bounty in his dispositions, as he is of infinite fullness in his resources, we should say beforehand that he can never institute a condition of short supply. Proportion, too, is a great and almost principal law of his realm, planet yearning after planet, and atom after atom, quantities of matter and motion after other quantities of matter and motion, regulated by exact ratios of distance—all the masses of the astronomic universe, all the atomic elements of universal chemistry—feeding each other, so to speak, in supplies that exactly meet their quantities of hunger. And yet, when we descend, or rather ascend, to man, we are met by the remarkable discovery that, for some reason, he is put under an ordinance of want, or short supply. He wants clothing for his body, as no one of all the beasts wants it; but it is given to the beasts and denied to him, except as he prepares it for himself. He wants a house for shelter; the squirrels have their trees, and the wolves their dens, but the face of the world offers no house made ready for him. He wants food and must have it; the ravens are fed, but the Father's bounty prepares him neither table nor bread. He wants tools wherewith to help himself; but the iron lies under the hills, and he must dig it out; and then he must find how to reduce it; and then how to make steel of it; and then how to fashion it; and, finally, how to temper it, before it is ready for use. He has also other kinds of wants. His ear wants music, and his eye wants beauty, and his mind wants knowledge, and his heart wants worlds-full of friends, and his imaginative ideals transcend all facts; but though he aches and writhes in so many deep kinds of hunger, he only catches here and there a glimpse of what his longings struggle after. His very life, in short, appears to be a fixed ordinance of want. We see him set down upon the world, and a thousand cries break out in his hungry nature which there is nothing ready to supply. His being holds no concord visibly with his condition, and there is no way for him to live, except as he conquers to himself means and instruments of living, which his Maker has not seen fit to create. He has given instincts or scenting powers to the young lions, by which they seek their meat; but from man he has withholden even these. So very stringent, so deliberately meant is the state of want in which he is placed. It is even as if God really had not enough to make up our needed supply.

And yet he makes an amount of waste in the outfit of his realm that is almost infinite. What immense burdens of weeds, and grasses, and woods, has he put growing in the remote wilds of nature. With how many choicest and most brilliant flowers does he garnish his solitudes, and how unsparingly does he load his gales with perfumes, to be swept across his deserts of sand and his water-deserts that we call seas. And then these deserts of both kinds are themselves called wastes; and rightly, because they occupy spaces that might have been covered with good land. Whole regions of the globe are waste by excess of frost; others by excess of rain; and others by excess of dryness and heat. The seas, though waste to us, are vast pasture-grounds of life to the watery herds nourished in their prolific bosom, and they rush through its foaming acres in every clime, in such bulk and number as would feed the whole human race, and suffer no diminution. But they die in their depths when their day is over, and are strewed as waste food in the waters. Cargoes of pearls are hid in the sea never to be gathered. Mountain-weights of gold are sunk, in gravity, down to the earth's center, or, at least, below where any shaft can reach them. God has cabinets of diamonds and other precious gems, that he keeps in his caverns for his own particular inspection, never to be seen by men. We are learning just now also that the forces of the world are much more precious in his eye than the gems; that he lets no force be lost or wasted; that what was forest ages ago, and a ledge of coal last month, and a steam power yesterday, is water and diffusive gas and heat to-day;

and thus, going through her rounds of correlation, nature keeps herself exactly good, squandering no mite of her original force. And therefore it is all the more strange, that such immense quantities of forces are kept in play from age to age, that never were and never can be utilized. Thus, if we could husband and apply the whole tide-swing force of the sea, it would suffice to keep more wheels in action than will ever exist in fifty such worlds as this. In the Gulf Stream alone, there is a greater amount of mill-force than in all the rivers and waterfalls of the planet. We offer it as a great proof of God's beneficence that he has made such provision for our culinary, heating, and steam-producing fires, in the immense coal formations of the globe; but if all the forests and oil and coal measures we have on hand were burned up in a single day, they would not make as much heat, probably, as the great central fires underground are making, day by day and age after age, and will make even for a thousand millenniums. And all this vast expenditure, as far as we can see, is waste, producing nothing, save here and there an earthquake. Even if the fuels were all spent, as many anticipate they will be, we could not get help enough from these hidden fires, by any method now known, to save ourselves from freezing. Only a mile or two of perpendicular distance there would then be between us and supplies of heat sufficient to answer all our purposes, but how to come at the fires we could not find. They are surplus fires, kept burning in their inaccessible caverns, and shut up there, as consecrated waste, for all time

Now these two great elements of want and waste will be seen to produce, and were probably meant to produce, impressions of a moral nature that could not be produced by either, or even by both acting separately. One of them, standing by itself and taken as an indication of God, would make us think of him as being straitened by too close a feeling of economy, able to give us never what we need, but only what we can possibly make sufficient by much study and weariness of the flesh; the other as being all profusion, caring more to pour it abroad than he does even to serve a possible use by it; as ready to garnish a solitude or a cavern, as to feed a starving invalid or child; doing it, in fact, when many invalids and children starve before him. But these two characters, taken separately, are neither of them true. The just conception is that he is such a being as can fitly combine the two, as the wisest and most completely beneficent sovereignty may require; can stint us for our sakes when not for his own; and then, again, can be lavish in things reducible to no use, that we may not suppose him to have stinted us because he is short, either in his resources or his dispositions. In this manner he can put us always on our industry, without casting any reflection on his bounty. In these cross lights, therefore, of want and waste he is always being discovered, and our impressions of him correspond. We could not understand him worthily in a state of merely short supply. As little worthily if he could not limit his profusion, to put us in such ways of training as will best meet the wants of our character, and best promote the good design he means to execute in us.

There is a peculiar felicity and strange cogency also in the impression made upon us of our ill desert in evil, by the joint action of these two factors—an impression that is even a kind of first condition of our moral benefit. How many, for example, that are shivering without fuel in the cold winter months, are put thinking of the vast, heavy-grown trunks there may be falling down for age, in climes perpetually warmed by the sun, and rotting away on the ground. Monkeys are chattering and leaping in animated glee through the branches that would yield them a fire, how greatly needed, for their comfort. Others are short of food or dying for hunger, who remember the squirrels that are sporting with nuts, or the panthers and bears glutting themselves with food, for want of which they starve. We suffer no want the supply of which is not somewhere perishing as waste. The sea is full of food, the solitudes of the world are clothed in beauty and vocal with music, all splendor and beauty and profusion fill the earth; still the riches are sooner wasted than allowed to come to us. And so we are compelled to say—who does not say it?—"manifestly God is bountiful, and yet he pinches me. I find it in my nature to love and desire profusion, this is the paradise of my fancy, and almost the practical need of my want, and yet, as if he had some thought against me, God puts me down here low, in short supply. What does it signify? Must I draw some lesson hence against myself?"

Pursuing thoughts like these, it will be difficult to avoid the impression of some moral defect or spiritual alienation that requires a stringently close discipline A sacrament of conviction occupies the whole scheme of life. Whether we speculate or not upon the contrast between our wants and the exuberant waste of Providence, we are set in a different mental attitude, and kept under the dominion of impressions above all salutary to us. We see the profusion round us, and, if we do not reason from it, we feel what must somehow be implied in it. A sense of estrangement breaks in, as it were, through our eyes. We accuse our poverty, and that in turn accuses us. The outward profusion makes us feel our spiritual wants, and the more we feel our spiritual wants, the more closely are we brought to the prodigal's resolve, when he says, "I will arise and go to my father." Notice, also, how these two feelings of want and waste concur in the prodigal's story. "He began to be in *want*," and he said, "My father has bread enough and to *spare*"—more than enough, bread that is even waste; and between these two points or poles it is that his bad conviction works. And so it is with us all; we commonly get our sense of wrong, as a moral state of alienation, more or less distinctly from the conjoined feeling of our own close poverty and God's infinite bounty. Were we set down here in short supply, and every thing about us made to bear the same close, stinted look—the sun shining economically, the rains only dewing the ground, the nights revealing only a star or two, the forest lands growing only sprigs and copse, and the sea producing only a few small fish, afraid both of man and of each other—the niggard aspect of such a state would rather put us on justifying ourselves, and would be as far as possible from begetting any tenderness of conviction toward God.

But there are uses both of want and waste that depend more especially on their separate action, and the impressions they produce in their own particular spheres. We make our survey next of these.

1. *Of such as belong to Want, or the state of Short Supply.*—And here we encounter at once, the fact that we are put on creating something, at the very outset of our life. We must do it, or die; which is the same as to say that we must consent so far to be creative, like our Creator himself. He stopped short in his own work, leaving our supplies unfinished, and requiring us to go on and finish them ourselves—to plant, and cultivate, and build, and spin, till the furniture of our comfort is complete. God could have made harvests as easily as seeds, and bread ready-baked as easily as harvests, and houses as easily as timber, or bricks as clay; or cloth as easily as wool, and coats as cloth; but he preferred to call us into creation with him, as if he would put meaning enough into our existence, to give it dignity somewhat like his own. For what dignity is there in the fact, as we look abroad on the scenery of the world, that all which differs the landscape in beauty from mere wild forest, the meadows, and rich fields,

and gardens, and flocks, and roads, and bridges, and churches, and monuments, and towns, and cities, is not God's particular work, but man's. God set him to the task, and he has done it, forming what is grander than the things themselves, a creative habit like his Maker's.

And there is the greater use and dignity in this, that every thing moral, even up to the joy of moral perfection, is, and is meant to be, creative. True moral joy is not infused into souls, but comes up out of hidden wells in their own positive goodness. Their beatific state is nothing but the consummation of a creative force working in the springs of their character. It is a state of power, and its joy is the birth of power. Passively received, it could not be. It is the mounting up of a soul, in the faith of God's nearness to it, into God's principles, aims, and emotions. Were it a state of mere passive receptivity, there would be no growth or development in it. A pampered weakness and glorified idleness would be the whole account of it.

Hence, the necessity of some such arrangement as would gird us to creative action, in a way of getting our supplies. Were there a perfect harmony and equilibrium between man's nature and the world — every want met by supply, every desire of his heart gratified as it rises — it were only a fit completion of the plan to case him in a shell and glue him to some rock, where the floods of bounty sweeping by shall bring him his nutriment. No, he could not be man as belonging to the testacea. Conflict only and battle can effectively muster his powers. He does not sufficiently exist if he is not made to fight for his existence. If he is not made creative, then he is but half created. Real life must have some heroic force in it, else it only breathes, but does not live. Sons of ease and luxury, who are never to have a wish ungratified, or the movement of a finger required, are put down as born in the family register, but they are only half-born as yet, and are not likely to be more, till they are put to the strain by wants and impediments, which they could better afford to buy than to have been without them. Sometimes a prodigious volunteer ambition may fulfill, in part, the same uses; but we commonly expect to see the effectives and great spirits and geniuses of the world struggling up out of obscurity and want and heavy throes of soul-birth, and taking their places as conquerors. They are men of victory, not of fortune. And therefore doubtless it was that, to give man a start, God threw him out of his equilibrium at the beginning, incorporating in him wants, the supply of which he is to get, only as he wrings it from his crude possibilities by strenuous exertion. Possibilities, not supplies, are given him, and it rests with him to convert his possibilities into supplies. Want is to be the dry-nurse of his powers, teaching him to think, contrive, resolve, and, putting means to their ends, create for himself. Hunger, meantime, gnaws at him, the heat scorches him, the rains drench him, the snows drive into his bosom, all the pitiless elements fall to work at him, and he takes up his fight to keep them at bay. At one point of victory he gets courage for another. Every success sharpens his invention, sets him to a firmer tension of resolve, and lifts him to a manlier confidence, and the first grand problem in his training, the development of his creative force, is effectually resolved. He is no more a mere being, but he is a practical being, whose internal possibilities are become more wonderfully full, than the crude and meager possibilities given him for the outward furniture of his life.

Consider, next, the moral significance of our state of short supply in the fact that so healthful and regular an impulse is imparted by it to habits of industry. Industry is the natural teacher and guardian of virtue, and the world is contrived to be its proper schooling-place. It proposes that we may obtain a well-endowed future here, just as holy obedience will do it hereafter—only in a lower plane of endeavor. Its industries are to be systematic, sober, and steady. Its cares are to be thoughtful. It will have us get on by constancy and the frugal saving of our gains; just as every highest saint will get his victories by the tender economy that saves his little advances. It holds the mind to a provident foreseeing habit, and concentrates the otherwise vagrant expectations and visionary dreams that pay their court to accident or fortune. Its pleasures are such as flow from the sight of its rewards and the enjoyment of its comforts. It consents withal to let go self-indulgence, and bear the toils of patience. It is, in fact, a kind of natural piety; coming to the great powers of nature—the seasons, the soil, the mechanical and chemical laws of the world—and there making application, as a Christian applies in prayer to his God, suing thence by labor the supplies and benefits it wants. It wrestles with nature as Jacob wrestled with the angel. It prays with Agur: "Feed me with food convenient for me." Its very toil is liturgical, without even a chance of formality. By how thin a vail is it separated thus from God; let it only bring its suit one degree closer, piercing the vail, and it becomes even holy piety itself. So closely to his bosom does God manage to bring us, under the teaching and discipline of a short supply. Not to admire the sublime teaching of want, viewed in this connection, will be difficult for any reflective person. Possibly here and there a man might go into some kind of action, bodily and mental, from a state of complete gratification or full supply. He might bound over the fields like the deer, in mere redundancy of life; he might pile up edifices just to see how they would look, having no other use for them; and if then, having grazed to the full in what is to him the great man-pasture, called the world—every sense delighted, every appetite cloyed—he shall betake himself to his bowers, and there, as the soft breezes fan his temples, let his busy fancy rove, creating images at random, and swimming in the glories of his poetic dreams; this would be activity, but activity, alas! without an object—a busy caprice, a strenuous idleness. Manifestly, such kind of activity would be a wretched preparation for any thing moral or holy. Set him under want, gird him to labor, see him wipe the sweat from his brow as he toils to get his bread, and we find him in how good a school, learning how brave a lesson—a lesson, too, that he wants much more than he does bread. Call it the curse: I will not stop to argue the question whether that curse was a miracle of blight added after man's defection, or a possibility inserted by anticipation, and developed by the terrible reactions of his sin itself; enough to know that, like all God's curses, it is a curse for benefit, which if we do not like it, will none the less faithfully stay by us. And who is there, what living man, that has any the least capacity of reflection, who has not discovered *that good necessities are the grandest wealth of existence?* To be cornered and pressed and edged on practically into the best ways and noblest endeavors, turned away from evil and made strong in good, corrected, lifted, amplified, and held fast in the way to be glorified—what man will not thank God for such good necessities more devoutly than for life itself?

It is also another very important use of want that it prepares a basis for what is called the *meum* and *tuum* of property; which is, in fact, a kind of first condition as regards the moral training of our life. Here it is that we learn what it is to be just and what to be unjust. Here it is that fraud and violence and falsity stir us to such faithful rigor and decisiveness in our moral condemnations. Mere principles would not signify much to us; they would even seem to be a great way off, if they did not touch us in something which vividly concerns us. We take part here for truth and justice and right and faith and exact honor, because there is property at stake, and who is indifferent to property? Our courts, too, and public records, and all our immense toil in the perfecting of the civil state as a defender of society, are but a part of the grand moral struggle that centers in the holding and use and transmission of property. Every principle we assert is moral; every right we vindicate is based in moral ideas.

But it is not perceived by all that God's institute of want is at the bottom of property, and so of all the moral discipline it brings with it. If we had every comfort and gratification ready for use; if our food were bending to us from the trees; if gold and diamonds were a full half the common dirt and gravel; if temples, railroads, and cities full of merchandise, were bursting up everywhere out of the ground of their own accord; there would, in such a case, be no chance of the existence of property. What we call property is created by the incorporation of labor, which gets a right, of course, to have what it has created, or by some kind of improvement modified.

But there can be no labor where there is no want. Who will put himself on toil to make up a supply that is made up already? And what care have we to say, this is mine, when we are more likely to throw it away than we are to have it taken from us? The whole fabric of society, as a moral affair, falls to pieces and is lost, as far as the rights of property and trade and titles and justice are concerned. We are only put to pasture in the world, with a certainty of being satisfied and surfeited, and cloyed by our abundance.

We shall also discover that many other of the principal preparations for our moral training are discontinued, in like manner, by the simple removing of want. The family, for example, is bound together chiefly by this tie. Husband and wife are knit by this tie, more stringent and often more enduring than love. Children want every thing, coming into life, as it were, in a type of universal want. Here, too, is the meaning of that intensely moral word—*home.* If there were a home everywhere, then there were no home. If there were supplies everywhere, then the common labors and rough hardships which bind families together—the property, the expected harvests, the hoped-for income—all the sweet bonds of care and common enjoyment are superseded. Let the children go into the fields as the young animals do, and they shall find enough. All the tender relations of care, and love, and government, in this best school of virtue are gone, and society has become a herd.

Again, it will be seen that the manifold distinctions and relations of mutual dependence, which constitute a basis for reciprocal duties and charities, are mostly due to the ordinance of short supply. For if the same unbounded gifts were poured out to us all, and every man could freely take his full supply, there would be no acquisition, and by consequence no property; all distinctions but such as are immediately personal would be unknown, and society would so far be dissolved. As it is now, everybody wants almost everybody. Labor seeks capital, and capital seeks labor. The poor look after employment, the rich look after service. The weak want friends and protectors, the strong want clients and dependents. Leaders must have followers, else they can not lead; followers must have leaders, else they must hew out their way for themselves. And then it is to be seen, through all these diversified relations of dependency, what is in every man's heart and principle, and what kind of passion will rule his conduct. Pride, arrogance, ambition, oppression, cruelty, avarice, envy, discontent, ingratitude, treachery—every man's evil, whatsoever it be — will be charactered as in definite sun-picture, and held up before him; and whatever is loathsome, disgusting, revolting in wrong, will be discovered to society, in and by society. And so, on the other hand, provision is made through society, set off by want in so many relations of dependence, for the discovery of whatever is beautiful in so many kinds of virtue—protection, favor, encouragement, example, patience toward the weak, forbearance toward weak enemies; answered by fidelity, truth, unstinted respect, unenvying homage to position. The immense power given to moral ideas by this light and shade of social distinctions and degrees can hardly be overestimated.

In this category, too, of social distinctions prepared by want, it is that provision is made, as it were of set purpose, for charity. It was never God's intention, in our state of short supply, that any should suffer lack. Had there been no place left among men for sacred charity, that would itself be the sorest lack of all. Who is more truly blessed than he that, being full, loves to impart his fullness to such as are in want? And when the suffering invalid, or child of sorrow, finds a large, free heart of brotherhood open to his want, is he not as truly blessed, though in a humbler key? This dear, divine charity, we can easily see, would have no place in the world, if there were no want in it. God makes room for it by his ordinance of want, giving it in charge thereby, to all that conquer a state of abundance, to make up what necessities are unsupplied; doing them great respect in leaving so many wants to be made up by them; which, if they do, he takes them, as it were, into honorable, high partnership with himself, saying, "Ye did it unto me."

But there is a more general and absolute kind of benefit in our state of want that remains to be named last of all, namely, the benefit of limitation itself. It is the sin of all sin that it refuses limitation—will not accept the limitations even of law. And then, since no limitation of law can be carried by mere force, what shall God do, with so great hope of benefit, as to put us under limitations, closely related, that can be so carried with propriety? Besides, if he had given us full scope in our passions and pleasures, as he must in a state of boundless supply, it is impossible to guess, into what depths of license and wild debauchery we should have been plunged. Appetites unrestricted, self-government broken, no labor, boundless gratification poured into the bosom of idleness, passions chastened by no sober necessities—a single thought suffices to show us, that want itself is now the greatest want. Let this come and be a cage of iron about us, since we can not be kept in heaven's order without a cage. If the bars press closely upon us and we writhe, much writhing will do us good, especially if our writhing takes the form of work and self-regulative economy; for the industry we practice is really a sort of obedience that we pay to limitation; and then, as the limitation accepted is nearest in resemblance to the restrictions of law, the obedience practiced is next thing, in a sense, to that holy obedience which is typified in it. Or, if our state of want galls our pride and sometimes worries it quite down, if it checks our presumption, tames our passion, makes us little and poor and weak, what are we doing but trying to make a god of this world, and what is more necessary or fit, than to starve our god and bring leanness into his worshipers? And it is none the worse if our state of want is more than disregarded in this manner—inflamed, exasperated, and made conscious. "It is a miserable state of mind," says Lord Bacon, "and yet it is commonly the case of kings, to have few things to desire and many things to fear." We should all be so far kings, if our supply were full; and, having few things to desire, we should be insipid and dry as most kings probably are to themselves. Great wants, a consciousness of want gaping wide as the sea, is but the yearning of a nature felt to be as great, and crying after God, who alone can be the possible complement of its desires; which want itself is even a kind of luxury, and poor indeed are they that have it not. It still remains to speak more briefly—

2. *Of the uses of Waste.*—When we see that God pours out of his abundance, in creative lavishments that never can be turned to any practical use by us, we are taken quite away from the conceit that something worthy of him is to be found, only when we discover in his works adaptations to our physical want or convenience. It has been a great study of science for many years past to discover such points of adaptation, and so great progress has been made that many are ready to assume the fact of nature's universal adaptation to our human uses in the bodily conditions. Doubtless nature is adapted somehow to our uses, but not, of course, to our physical uses. Some things will be the better adapted to our mental and moral uses, that they are not adapted to our physical, and because they are not. Every thing created must be somehow the expression of God, and all that is in God is adapted certainly to our best uses in thought and duty and character. But if we could reduce both him and his work to a mere contriving of physical and mechanical adaptations for our comfort, we should make him out a scheme of morality in about the lowest figure of utility that ever was or can be imagined. And to save us apparently from so great folly and falsity, he has made a very large part of his creation for waste, as far as any mere physical uses are concerned—all the polar regions,

all the inaccessible summits of the mountains, all the deserts, all the immense depths of the seas, and what is more, and some thousands of miles deeper, all the tremendous steam-gulfs and fire-seas boiling at the world's core—indeed, there is nothing in God's whole creation adapted to our physical use, and nothing that ever can be, save in the globe's mere bark or peel. In that superficial and very thin covering, too, a very great part shows no trace of adaptation, and is, besides, interlarded with agues and miasmas, and all sorts of mineral and vegetable poisons. So carefully has God excluded the possibility of a mere Bridgewater treatise religion—he will not have it assumed that the chief end of God is adaptation to man. He gives us all the productive means we want, and makes the world correspond with us up to just that point where it had best correspond with himself, representing not so much his contrivance as the spontaneous out-pouring of his illimitable quantities and exhaustless forces of creatorship. For it was a matter of as great consequence to us to see his exuberance as his contrivance, and his creation was to be the more grandly adapted to us, that it transcended so far all petty possibilities of physical use, and revealed, on so vast a scale, the waste he could afford to spread about him, as the type of his own divine splendor and profusion.

We look abroad thus over the vast unutilized quantities of his realm, and perceive at once that he is measuring his work not by us, but by himself rather; and it comes into mind: "the Lord hath made all things for himself." We behold the realms of air and earth and sea peopled with joyous life; as if to say that he has pleasure in adaptations made for other creatures as truly as for man—insects and mere animated atoms —able without exhaustion to set their instincts, and make up their instrumentations, in the nicest forms of fitness; creatures that will live and die unvalued by us, and, therefore, have no value save to him. His care of them is perfect, though it be the care of waste, and reveals, in just that fact, his really divine capacity. And if it be something to us that the air is adapted to our breathing and blood, the earth to our feet, the water to our thirst, far more does it signify that there are so many myriads of creatures, folded by God's care, who exist only for his private eye—breathing, leaping, flying, and filling his realm with their gambols, and yet living only as before him.

By this same exuberance of care expended on the wild races of life it was that the sacred poet's mind was so deeply impressed, when he sang his Bridgewater treatise in this high strain, reciting God's care of the beasts—"planting the cedars of Lebanon where the birds make their nests; as for the stork, the fir-trees are her house; the high hills are a refuge for the wild goats, and the rocks for the conies; the young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God. O Lord, how manifold are thy works; in wisdom hast thou made them all; the earth is full of thy riches. So is this great and wide sea wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts. These wait all upon thee, and thou givest them their meat in due season." Wherefore his conclusion is—what other could he think of?—"The glory of the Lord shall endure forever; the Lord shall rejoice in his works." For beholding God thus, in works of multitudinous life which are waste to us, having no relation to our physical uses, they have even the sublimer use that they represent the fertile fatherhood of God; and yet another use, in teaching us not to assume that we are measures of the world's contents, not to put ourselves to any airs of loftiness, as if the world were made for our convenience. It is made for us mainly in the sense that, being waste for us, it is expression for God. We are tenants here of a large house, emmets, I may say, in a vast cathedral, which if it do not yield us all the supplies we want, yet bears the signatures of loftier, holier uses that exceed our petty measure and proportion. And yet the temple, vast as it is, is not too vast for our feeling, and full as it is of things existing only for God, it is even the more appropriate and better adapted to us, because they represent his glory.

I will only add, in conclusion, what appears to be quite evident, and was doubtless meant to be, in this matter of waste, that use or utility is not any certain law of morality or religious conduct. That box of ointment that was going to be spent for nothing—how plausible was the appeal to use, recounting the pennies it would have sold for, and the nice things it would have bought for the poor! Only it was Judas, and not Christ, that was forward in the argument. Christ was willing to have it all spent as a tribute of pious luxury on his own head, and even praised the woman besides, as he almost never praised any one of his disciples. "To what purpose is this waste?" For the very same purpose, we are to answer, that some things are best which do not meet a bodily want, and because they do not; best because they are waste; even as nineteen-twentieths of God's creation itself is waste. Much he does for our comfort and happiness; a great deal more to raise an opinion of his resources, and the glorious wealth of his fatherhood. To beget or express a sentiment is a matter of as great consequence to him as to serve a convenience. He neither holds nor would teach, that charity goes by a law of economy, or that virtue tallies with utility. He breaks away, himself, from all utilitarian standards, and pours himself out in his own measures. So there is to be a certain lavishment and waste in what we call our piety. We are to have our secret testimonies, offer our hidden sacrifices, do our alms, which only God shall know; delight to spend, for love's sake, more than we need, pour out bounties that never can be utilized, save by some feeling or faith enriched. Ornament, perfume, color, proportion, expense, majesty, any kind of waste that is not ambitious, and only expresses the heart, as the woman's ointment expresses hers, stands well in the terms of duty. God is no philanthropist, and does not train us to be, save in that high sense that he can sometimes allow even our human want to be stringent, when he lavishes bounty on the sea or sprinkles the dust with gold

III.

OF BAD GOVERNMENT.

It is one of the complaints of Job, that "the earth is given into the hand of the wicked;" which, if it is less generally true now than it was in his day, still continues to be a standing complaint of the world. The deplorable fact, the moan of history, as we all know, is bad men in power, and still bad men in power. We follow down the train of nations and peoples, and distinguish everywhere the groanings of this sorrow. The flies that buzz and flutter in the tyrant spider's web are an image too faithfully true of our miserably weak humanity, wriggling, age upon age, in the toils of abused power. What unspeakable sufferings crowd the dismal story! Order is the pretext for all worst and most cruel disorder. Ideas of right and liberty make their appearance late, and then as crimes. Industry is trampled, property and titles violated, families broken by exile, weakness stripped of shelter, and crime of redress. Virtue itself is crushed and duty persecuted. Woes of taxation, woes of plunder and lust, under cover of public authority; woes of bleeding for conquest, and bleeding under conquest—whole nations and peoples dragged into the march to die, leaving other nations depopulated and bare, where their desolating march has swept—there is no end, in short, to the distractions, poverties, starvations, bereavements, and bitter pangs of wrong, which are being laid, in all ages, on the world, by the cruelties of wickedness in power. When we say these things, crowding our large impeachment into a few short sentences, we seem to be rather making a declamation than a sober statement of it; but if we could summon up the facts and scenes, and set them forth specifically in full historic array, they would take an air of verity so dreadful, as to make us even shudder at the possible endurance of the world.

Why then is it, and how, that power is generally found in the hands of wicked men? It is not always so; as we see when a Cyrus, a Cimon, a Regulus, an Alfred, a Washington, or a Lincoln holds the reins of empire. Sometimes a real usurper like Cromwell seizes the condition of power, to wield it only for the vindication of right and liberty. And when just men, like these, are allowed to show the immense beneficence of power, in the blessings conferred on their times, and the up-looking comfort and strength produced, in a few short years, by their righteous administration, we only wonder the more that such examples could not be more frequent; asking again, less patiently than before, Why is it that so many bad men are allowed to stalk over the world in baleful prerogative, crushing out again and again, one after another, the rights of merit, and the promises and possibilities of public civilization?

Must we, therefore, doubt that God is good? or that he organizes law and public rule for the protection of right, and the advancement of all best ends in society? Perhaps it may be true, as we often hear, that bad empire is better than no empire at all; and Providence, it may be thought, is justified by the preponderant benefits of law, however wickedly administered, as compared with the unspeakable miseries of general anarchy. But why should it be necessary to make out our vindications of Providence in this low scale of computation? If authority and empire are so much wanted, that the benefits a little predominate even when wickedly administered, how much better and more invaluable are they, when they are held by just men faithfully serving their times. And just so much worthier is it of Providence —never sufficiently honored save when it provides the best—to have good men always in power. And we seem to have an almost imperative reason why it should be so, in the fact that we are even put in moral obligation to "the powers that be," on the express ground, that they are "the ordinance" of God himself. All the more strange is it, therefore, that bad powers are declared to rule thus in God's right, and that we are further required, on holy principle, to obey them. So at least we reason—why not well?

And yet not well, as we shall abundantly see, when we look the problem through more carefully, and bring out the points of a true and sufficient solution. They are such as these:—

1. Bad men are never in power because they are preferred and selected by Providence; but they are set in power by the laws of inheritance, or they win their election to power by wicked and corrupt arts, or they seize on the condition of power by unscrupulous acts of

usurpation. Such laws of inheritance too are created, not immediately by God, but by human society rather, and are only providential in the sense that God allows society, in a merely permissive way, to establish its own customs and precedents; preferring, as a matter of benefit to society, to let it have a qualified agency in its own government, instead of ruling it by absolute dictation himself. Besides, it is by no requisition of Providence, that the ruler promoted by inheritance is a bad man. He could be a true, just man, such as God is ever prompting and helping him to be. Exactly the same thing is to be said when a bad man mounts into power, as a trust conferred by election. Society made the laws of election; society made the choice. Providence did not prefer his election, but only preferred to have the people elect for themselves, and do it wisely; only meaning to have them get instruction enough, when they do it unwisely, to rectify their judgments and give them a conviction, more profoundly impressed, of the necessary requisites of justice and character. Not even a usurper need be a bad man, or make any bad use of power. When his act of usurpation is instigated only by the public woes of his time, which woes cry to God for redress, he fulfills a call of duty, and is, in fact, the more sublimely right, that he dares to seize a power which feebler souls would not. Had Washington failed, history might question whether he was not a usurper, as it is quite commonly agreed that Cromwell, God's true champion, was. But the bad usurper, the Nimrod of his time, is not put in his place by God and is not wanted there; only God consents, for the peace of society, that powers usurped by wrong shall be taken as powers *de facto* and obeyed, till they are broken by their own excesses, or some counter-revolution is organized with a rational chance of success. It is not, therefore, true that God puts any bad man in power, or, in any proper or true sense, prefers to have him in power. His plan is simply to let society and man come into this field, and learn sufficient wisdom in it to to prefer and elevate only the just.

2. It will perhaps be imagined, that if God does not set the bad in power himself, he could, at least, prevent their coming into power, and save the world in that manner from all the public miseries inventoried in history. In a certain coarse physical sense, he could; that is, managing the world by omnipotent force, he has force enough to do it. But he does not govern the world by force. He has consented to govern it through its liberty; that is, by counsel, influence, secret motivities and providential corrections, just far enough off, or far enough back, to allow no finger's weight of force on the prerogatives of liberty. In this way God has consented because it was best, to have men generate and man their own institutions. In this finer, higher sense, therefore, it is no irreverence to God to say that he could not prevent the obtaining of power by wicked men; for we only mean that, for good and sufficient reasons, he has consented not to interfere by force in holding them back, and that, as will be seen at once, puts his omnipotence out of the question.

Besides, there is a great deal more implied in preventing their attainment of power than may at first be apparent. No mere holding down or repression of their lustful energies will be sufficient, save as there is an immense uplifting of society also into character, and law, and courage for the right. No bad man seizes the condition of power without help. And here, in fact, is the principal difficulty; that society itself is so low and weak and wicked, as to offer itself as a prey to any most crafty, unscrupulous leader. And there is, in fact, no way of preventing his attainment of power, save as he is hemmed about by stouter souls in the panoply of stouter principles. Where there is a mean, dejected, fawning spirit, the bad man need not be much of a hero in getting power; he will, in fact, be lifted into it.

It takes very little force to mount above weakness, ignorance, and low servility; it would even require a very considerable power of self-control not to usurp, by their instigation, some right of precedence. What wonder, in fact, is it that men have been deified and set up as idols of religious worship, where souls are only abjects to themselves; where the low-born feeling is dazed by airs of pride and circumstance, and the feeble admirations and base sycophancies of sin have taken away, not only the manliness, but the proper energy of selfishness? Thus comes also caste, a classification of orders that is set on a footing even of religious conviction; not that the upper rank has put down the lower, any more than the lower has lifted and sanctified the upper. Had the lower continued to be men, the upper could never have become gods. They made a bid for degradation themselves, and took it by divine right, because it was in them already. Much the same is true of fashion. Some tyrant, or some favorite of some vicious court, or it may be only a court exquisite, or court harlot, has been able, by a certain splendid audacity, to set the mode; and then how tamely, nay, how eagerly, submits the world! running to put on its badges of humiliation, ashamed to be without them, and even fearing not to be as abject as the law of abjectness requires. Terrible power this tyrant of the mode! Rather say, sad, awful weakness, this subserviency, nay, pride of subserviency, in the race. And how many things does it include—opinions, associations, duties, and even the choice of a religion itself! How few can dare to be singular even in these. It requires, in fact, less nerve to fight a battle than to resist a fashion.

We help bad men into power in other ways less feeble and as much more greedy. The usurper makes no stride by himself, but he has his retainers and conspirators about him waiting for the spoil. Thus, if he is to be elected to power, he will have his file-leaders and voters and vote-buyers about him, even as the eagles are gathered to their prey. Or, perhaps, they will have banded themselves together, and set him up to be promoted by their vote, not for his sake but their own; in the name of precedence making him their tool. And the greediest, wildest despotism in the world is the power that is wielded as a tool. A political party will often be more sure of its ascendency, as it is more desperate in character—held together as a many-headed tyranny, for whole generations, by the cohesiveness of wrong, and a liberty that is free to sell the muniments of order and right. Conquerors do not harness the people to their chariot unhelped; but the people themselves want, some of them, a hero, and some of them a chance to be heard of themselves, and a great many more to see the brave sight of an army; so they march to the standard with cheers—only dragging after them, by compulsion, such as will not go for the spoil or the glory. Slavery might seem to be mere force, instigated and helped by nothing but the lust of gain. And yet this ownership of men was only bought of another ownership that was gotten by capture, and that capture again was bid for by the weakness of the captives, waiting, as it were, to be seized. And so poor Africa groans under the heel of slavery, simply because Africa herself is breeding and hunting her children, to endow this awful tyrant power of slavery, the worst and most wicked, in some respects, the world has ever seen.

Glancing about thus, in every direction we discover some kind of bad power mounting into ascendency. What men can, they seize—usurpation is the devil, so to speak, of all high possibility. But, generally, there is a vast complex connivance with them in society itself. They are instigated, set on, thrust forward, lifted up, by the weakness, the foolish subserviency, the mean servility, the greediness, and rampant passion of the world. So that, if we require it of God to prevent the attainment of power by bad men, he can do it only by preventing society at large from being just what it is—exactly what he has been doing, in all ages, from the first day until now; only it is not yet done, and, in fact, can be done, only by the slowest and tardiest regeneration possible.

3. It will sometimes occur to us that if God may not prevent the raising of bad men to conditions of power, he might well enough restrain them in their abuses of power; hedging them about by his providence, humbling them by his providential judgments, inventing checks and counter-checks, making the love of popularity restrain the greediness of plunder, setting a balance between sensuality and ambition, holding back from manifold wrongs by the dread of wide-spread conspiracies, making the temptation of a name an argument for great public beneficence, wielding the dread of other powers, as a motive for the highest possible advancement of wealth and character and art in the people of the tyrant power to be maintained. Even masters might be set to the cultivation of all best powers, whether of body or mind, in their slaves, by the consideration of higher honor and higher profit to themselves, in the use of their faculties. All such counterbalancings and restrainings of motive by opposing motive, are, in fact, employed to a certain extent, and are always at work under providence; but they only moderate, never effectually stop the rage of bad power. To a certain extent, we come into this field ourselves, having it as one of our own great points of wisdom in

the adjustment of political institutions, to make up what we call "a system of checks and balances;" and some of our most theoretic statesmen appear to imagine that it can be done, with such perfect nicety of perception, as to make every thing keep traverse, no matter how bad the magistrates or the people. This most preposterous conceit, which undertakes to make bad society good enough for good government, has never been attempted by the supreme government of the world. And if possibly God could execute such a feat of skill, he would certainly deem the trick more mischievous than ingenious. What could be a greater subversion of moral distinctions, than to have bad men as beneficent, as much beloved, as profoundly honored, as the good and the just? If wicked sovereigns, having no regard in principle for righteousness, would yet, for policy's sake, be always faithful to the right; if they would sanctify justice, not because it is just, but because justice is salutary; if they would assert the right of the poor, because the poor may yet be rich, though despising now their brotherhood; if, for any and all such false motives, they would rightly moderate the uses of power, and win it thus for their distinction in history, that they did well and grandly served their people, when caring for no principle, and living in no terms of moral order, they would be the very greatest curse to society that society has ever seen—greater, happily, than ever has been or ever will be seen. Wrong in the attitudes and honors of right! profligacy wholesome! pride as good as principle! passion trust-worthy! selfishness beneficent! Such kinds of character, if we had them, would very nearly overset the distinctions of virtue, and would be, in fact, the greatest conceivable calamity to the race. We are brought on thus:—

4. To that which appears to be the grand all-determining reason of Providence in the elevation of bad men to conditions of power; namely, the very important, quite indispensable uses they may serve, by their wrongs in that condition, as related to the better and more effective development of moral ideas. It is simply letting society and man be what they are, to show what they are. For, in raising a world out of evil, a very considerable and first problem is, to reveal it to itself, or set it in the best conditions to make such a revelation. The revelation of God is one thing, but a prior and equally necessary thing is that man should make a revelation of himself; that is, a revelation of what is evil and demands a cure. For evil, as a purely spiritual matter, hid in the heart, is not so very obvious, and is all the less so that we are so much accustomed to it, and so necessarily blunted by it. Hence it becomes a great and forward problem in the world's economy, how to get evil most effectually revealed to itself. And it is done, as we shall see, in three principal modes or degrees; namely, in what we are and do to inferiors, what we do as between equals, and what we do in conditions of power that give authority.

Thus if one is hard upon the poor, harsh to children, cruel to animals, he makes, or may, a very great discovery of himself; such as, simply sitting down to muse or think within himself, it would even be impossible to make. What is in him is brought forth by his acts, and distinctly mirrored in them. The same is true of his conduct among equals. If he is unjust, passionate, severe, revengeful, jealous, dishonest, and supremely selfish, he is in just that scale of society, or social relationship, that brings him out to himself. Simply existing, with so much evil in him, would give him no such impressions; but the friction of his life among equals, in neighborhood and family, in trade and travel, in society and opinion, keeps him all the while astir, and lets him forth in continual self-discovery. He can not slink away out of sight into the obscurity and occult meanness of his own self-containing silence, but he is obliged to feel his torment, and reveal his malady, both to himself and to others.

But the full, sufficient, supremely impressive revelation is never made save in the condition of authority, and it appears to be one of the great ends of civil society, to prepare and bring forth to the general sense of mankind this revelation. The fact is recognized that government is wanted, and must somehow or other be had, and then society as it is—the weak, the wicked, the foolish, the strong, all mixed up together, and brewed historically as a caldron heated by much fire—is to throw up leaders, chiefs, princes, magistrates, constitutions, here in one form and here in another, and what man can do for himself, in getting up protections and protectors, is to be seen. And a very considerable part of his benefit is to be gotten by his failures. Evil is scarcely to be known as evil, till it takes the condition of authority. We do not understand it till we see what kind of god it will make, and by what sort of rule it will manage its empire. So it results, that bad men get their ascendency, because there is badness in the world; and then they rule the world as tormentors and tyrants, because they must needs act out the evil that is in them. In this very simple statement, we have the short account of how large a part of the world's bitterest woes! This one word *oppression*, what a history has it!—in the tears and groans and robberies and captivities and shackled bodies and desolate homes of mankind; in so many peoples moaning to each other, age upon age, the outcast lot of merit, and the cruel persecution of religion; in so many times of dejection when society loses hope and possibility under the humiliations of defeat, the prostrations of industry, the disabilities of debt, the violated honor of contracts and treaties—representing, all, the madness of power. The feeling brought forth in this manner, and kept in painful tension, under almost all experiences of power, is the feeling of wrong, bitter oppression and abuse, mockery of right and reason, and the cry goes up audible or silent to God—O Lord! how long, how long?

What now is this but a conviction impressed, or revelation made, of some dreadfully malign principle in our humanity. It can not bear elevation. Power makes a demon of it. And yet we go on trying to make society safe, and organize some kind of power that will save us from the abuses of power—a task that is, alas! how difficult. But this one grand fact or issue is at least made sure, and it is of greater moral consequence than success itself would be; namely, that in all our nations and families that class above the grade of barbarism, we are kept in continual stress, or strain, to conquer a condition of right and safe protection. Hence all the struggles, agitations, and great revolutions for liberty, from the times of the Greeks downward. Almost every people have had in turn their Draco, their Pisistratus, and their thirty tyrants more or less, and the struggle has been going on, everywhere, in every age, to heave off the burdens of oppression and pluck down the oppressors, and conquer, if possible, some state of law and liberty; for what we mean by liberty is not release from law, but a state of security and sheltered equity under it. Such liberty, how dear to man! made dear, by what ages of trial and sorrow under the loss of it! The very idea of such liberty is moral, and the grand struggle of the ages to gain it is a struggle after moral ideas and the sublime, divine equities of law. And just here all the merit of God's plan, as regards the permission of power in the hands of wicked men, will be found to hinge; namely, on the fact, that evil is not only revealed in its baleful presence and agency, but the peoples and ages are put heaving against it, and struggling after deliverance from it. We do not commonly think of it—this tossing of men's souls after liberty—as being moral at all; we call it political, but the contest, if we can but see it, hangs entirely on such moral ideas of right and beneficence as are staple matters in gospel itself. Our very struggle against the domination of evil-doers puts us so far in respect of right, and begets a kind of salutary prejudice in us against evil. Even if we never pray for this holy boon of equity and right which power has robbed us of, we do, at least, long heavily, strive earnestly, suffer manfully, and fight in life's peril to regain it. What we call society, kept heaving in this kind of struggle, becomes intensely moral, and all we do for it is done to make our life endurable, by the re-establishment of just such muniments of right as we have ourselves cast off. As far as we go, we are fighting ourselves up into redemption. Not that every man who is earnest for liberty, is trying how to become a saint, but that, in a certain general way, the drift and striving of society is toward conditions of right and equity, such as faithfully accord, when deeply sounded, with all the highest and divinest principles of duty. And how great a point is this to be gained in a world under evil!

We do not always turn ourselves about in pious reflections, it is true, on what we are doing in these matters—do not imagine perhaps that we are getting human evil revealed by these woes of wrong and oppression; still less that when we are rioting and wrestling for liberty, we are drawing toward everlasting principles of right and divine reason; probably still less, that we are uncovering, in all, the glory of God and God's true magistracy. Here is power that wants no checks and balances to keep it safe; here is due shelter for the weak; here is equity for the proud and the violent themselves; here is justice never perverted, and law never misapplied. All this exactly is what we are striving after, and yet we do not see it; what has our great struggle with bad power to do with God? We have no thought in it of being at all religious. Just so, it is probably true; and still I am obliged to believe that religious ideas are brought as much closer to us, as we are brought closer to them, and God as much closer to our feeling as religious ideas are more closely bound up with our successes. What is the great political reformer and champion of his people doing, under so many abuses of power, but contending for terms of right and benefit? What is he maintaining but that government is for the benefit of the governed?—based, in this manner, in the supreme law of beneficence. What then is he doing but affirming and glorifying God's "powers"? And what is more likely, more necessary in fact, than that he and the people that follow him will be drawn sometimes to think of God more approvingly and with a softer feeling. They want beneficence—how bitterly do the poor creatures ache for it!—and here it is, full-orbed and ideally perfect. It is quite impossible that nations, struggling thus after deliverance from iniquitous power, and the establishment of righteous liberty, should not more easily be drawn to God and religion. They may for the time be less religiously reverent, they may rather seem to have their affinities with all kinds of unbelief, but their real bent even then is better than it seems they only disbelieve what power has so fearfully abused; but God as he is, when fitly seen, will be more easily loved as the world's Great Friend and Keeper.

We discover also, what accords with this, that all our modern advances in the department of government and public liberty are attended by another kind of advance which is moral, and exactly keeps pace with them. Our constitutions, our limitations of monarchy, our abatements of priestly despotism, our vindication of free thought and opinion, our new created parliaments, our emancipations, our world-free commerce under world-wide guaranties of law—while we are asserting in all these forms the supreme right of society to be ruled for its own good, there begins to be a deference paid almost everywhere to the principle of beneficence itself. We assert the brotherhood of man; we take part in feeling with weakness and dejection the world over; we educate our own peoples and try to evangelize others; we think we begin to see how party can be organized and held fast in right, instead of being wild force only, organized by the cohesiveness of plunder. Moral ideas are set up in public arguments, incorporated in the documents of thrones, and also begin to have an acknowledged place in statesmanship. Not only do magistrates by election, but the most absolute princes, admit the strictly moral tenure of their rule, and their obligation to rule only for the good of their people. The change, in one view, is a result of Christianity, beginning, at last, to win its true place in society. In another view it is due to the immense struggles of our modern nations after liberty; instigated originally by the oppressions and the unendurable wrongs of wickedness in power. Both concur, one as a power moving down upon society from without, the other as a power bursting up out of society instructed by its woes.

It requires to be added, for the complete development of this subject, that political society makes no real and permanent gain when it makes a conquest for liberty, save as that gain is utilized and set fast in the department of moral ideas and principles. We have just passed through a great public contest for example, not with our thirty tyrants, but our thirty or three hundred thousand tyrants of slavery, to induce and bring to the ground the malign power they were asserting above our laws and institutions. They had been educated to be tyrants, and could not be republicans. There was never any possibility that a leadership trained by slavery should not make a magistracy contemning right and the restraints of law. They now lie prostrate, and their many-headed tyranny is broken; and yet there is nothing done for true liberty in them by merely forced emancipation of their slaves. Give them power, and it will be bad power still, until the gain is utilized and made fast in their moral feelings and opinions. They can never be republicans till they get into the divine principle of law, as the guardian of liberty. If the tyrannical passion of mastership is in their hearts, if the slavery stays by morally, though broken physically, they can not be citizens in any true republic.

Let them have the condition of power, and it would be bad power, still impossible, as ever, to be kept in terms of allegiance. There have been a great many overthrows of bad power in the world, but not one of them has ever been a gain to liberty, save as there has been some moral gain accomplished, to sanctify and set in place the principles of right and beneficence. How many republics have the French people had proclaimed during this present century! Have they gained their liberty? Just as much of it as they have gained in moral convictions, principles, ideas of right, and duty. If they should only gain a little more, they might bear the liberty of the press, and perhaps Napoleon could bear it too. So if we proclaim the republic, as against slavery, ten times in a century, we shall only gain upon the slavery as far as God's free principles—goodness and true brotherhood—are incorporated, by our ten campaigns against it; and it makes a very great difference, be it observed, whether it is they campaigning for liberty themselves, or we campaigning for it in them.

It remains, in conclusion, to suggest what appears to be a very important deduction, as regards the moral uses of abused power, that it would be a very great misfortune to any people who are loose and low in their moral ideas, to have a smooth and equitable government kept up among them for a great length of time. If, by some mischance, some power of right tradition, or a kind temperament in a royal stock, some adjustment of checks and balances, some distribution of public functions in the departments of legislation, of justice, and of executive administration—if in any such way the government should keep itself in wholesome respect to right, when the people are growing selfish, and dastardly, and cruel, and sensual, and false-hearted, and knavish in trade, what is there, in the cast of their history, to make them any better? Manifestly nothing. What they want is bad government, and a good long time of it; and what they want they will have, though it may come late. They must have a call for courage, else they will never get it, and they must groan bitterly, before they can raise that cry for liberty that rallies courage. The only good medicine for their selfishness will be found in their public sacrifices. Much blood-letting will be needed to get their meanness out of them. If they are cruel and treacherous—for the two things commonly go together—they will get a softer, truer magnanimity in the heroics of liberty. Their time may not come along just as we imagine, but it will come. Let us not imagine that it will not come to us, because we have a government written out. Men are not controlled by the wrappings of paper. If we come to want a usurper, and make a bid for one by our moral degeneracy, our sycophancy, our violence and reckless passion, we shall have him. A thoroughly wicked majority is enough to make as much wickedness in power as we can find how to master. There is, in fact, no tyranny so dreadful as that tyranny by the million, which is organized by a corrupt party. It is not, of course, smooth sailing that we have to do in future, as many are ready to assume. As we have had to groan for our deliverance, so may also our children. Better is it for them, if they require it. Have we not ourselves gotten benefit out of our sacrifices? Do we not feel strengthened mightily in our principles? Do we not seem to have had a new, grandly moral sense of them opened in our hearts? In that sense, maintained by whatever means, let the republic stand.

IV.

OF OBLIVION, OR DEAD HISTORY.

If there be any thing worth living for, in the case of a man or a people, most of us would be ready, by a kind of natural inference, to conclude that there must be so much that is worth being remembered. In this inference, too, we are helped by the filial reverence that binds us to the men or ages that have gone before us, and by the almost invincible instinct of historic curiosity itself; allowing us never to rest without knowing something of the strange world-field behind us, and the seeds out of which we have come. We have it also as a maxim, that we differ as men from the brutes, chiefly in our capacity to profit by example, and we even go so far in this matter, as to think that we make out real philosophies of history. And yet of all that we call history—that is, human history—the greater part is dead, utterly gone out and lost. The rocks of the world have registered the story of creatures far inferior. Even the birds have printed their tracks, and the rain drops spattered their marks on the pages of the register; but of man's great history, so much later begun, and so much deeper in its meaning, only the dimmest and most scanty vestiges remain, to represent whole thousands of years. What thoughts wrestled in those dim centuries; what songs were sung; what structures reared; what names figured; what peoples tramped across the fields of time in their marches and wars—all these are gulfed in oblivion, and practically to us are not. Descending to what are nominally called first eras, we begin to gather up traditions, and vestiges, and scanty and dry records, that have a certain historic look, but not much of history. And the history is scarcely more real when we come to the times of definite and formal narrative; only a few forward names and events, and figures, are put moving as shadows in the story, but what the vast populations have been doing, what they have felt, and been, is dead; not only not recited in the past tense of grammar, but having no longer any tense at all. Not even the recent past is preserved accurately enough to be really known. Who ever fails to note the misconceptions, or only half conceptions of a written story, having lived in the time, and been a part of the transaction, himself? And how many that read this article, after all they may have heard of their own grandfather and the facts and incidents of his life, will be able to feel that they truly possess the man. Probably there is a kind of mythic air in so many stories and traditions, such as seem to be shadows only of his life and person—nothing more, and scarcely so much as that.

Now it will be obvious to any one at a glance, that God has not made any such thing as a complete remembrance of past ages possible. He writes oblivion against all but a few names and things, and empties the world to give freer space for what is to come. No tongue could recite the whole vast story if it were known, the world could not contain the books if it were written, and no mind reading the story could give it possible harbor. Besides, there are things in the past which no tradition can accurately carry and no words represent. Who that will untwist the subtle motives of action can do it far enough to make out any thing better than a tolerable fiction! Who can paint a great soul's passion as that passion, looked upon, painted itself? To come down to things more humble, yet by no means less significant, by what words can any one find how to set forth a gait or a voice? And yet, if I could simply see the back of Cato jogging out a-field, or hear one sentence spoken by Cæsar's voice, it really seems to me I should get a better knowledge of either, from that single token, than I have gotten yet from all other sources. So very impotent are words to reproduce, or keep in impression the facts and men of history. We have a way of speaking, in which we congratulate ourselves on the score of a distinction between what are called the unhistoric and historic ages. The unhistoric, we fancy, make no history, because they have no written language. But having such a gift, with paper to receive the record of it, and types to multiply that record, and libraries to keep it, and, back of all, a body of learned scribes, who are skilled in writing history as one of the elegant arts, we conclude that now the historic age has come. We do not perceive, that, in just this manner, we are going to overwrite history, and write so much of it that we shall have really none. If we had the whole world's history written out in such detail of art, we could not even now make any thing of it—the historic shelf of our library would girdle the world. What, then, will our written history be to us, after it has gotten fifty millions of years into its record? for we must not forget that the age we live in is but the world's early morning. Calling it the historic age, then, what are we doing in it but writing-in oblivion, as the unhistoric age took it without writing at all?

By a simple glance in this direction, we perceive that God, for some reason, scrutable or inscrutable, has determined to let large tracts of past events be always passing into oblivion; and though it disappoints, to a certain extent, that filial instinct which unites us to the past, and puts us on the search to find, if possible, who are gone before us and what they have done, I think we shall discover uses enough, and those which are sufficiently beneficent, to comfort us in the loss.

And, first of all, it will be seen that we do not lose our benefit in the past ages, because we lose the remembrance of their acts and persons. Do the vegetable growths repine or sicken because they can not remember the growths of the previous centuries? Is it not enough that the very soil that feeds them is fertilized by the waste of so many generations moldering in it? The principal and best fruits of the past ages come down to us, even when their names do not. If they wrought out great inventions, these will live without a history. If they unfolded great principles of society and duty, great principles do not die. If they brought their nation forward into power and a better civilization, the advances made are none the less real that their authors are forgotten. Their family spirit passed into their family, and passes down with it. Their manners and maxims and ideas flavored their children; then, after them, their children's children; and so more truly live, than they would in a book. About every thing valuable in a good and great past is garnered in oblivion; not to be lost, but to be kept and made fruitful. For it is not true that we have our advantage in the past ages mainly in what we draw from their example, or gather from the mistakes of their experience. We have our benefit in what they transmit, not in what we go after and seek to copy. And passing into causes, they transmit about every thing they are; and, to a great extent, their corrections for what they are not; producing emendations probably in us, that are better than they could find how to make in themselves.

But we do not really strike the stern moral key of Providence in this general sentence of oblivion passed upon the race, till we make full account of the fact that the major part of our human history is bad in the matter of it. This, to some, will seem uncharitable, or unduly severe; but if they feel it necessary to be offended, they have only to run over the general bill of written history, and see what makes the staple matter of the record, to perceive how faithfully the stricture holds. Very few good men, and very few really great deeds figure in the record. Great wrongs, oppressions, usurpations, enmities, desolations of unholy war, persecutions of righteousness and truth, are the chief headings of the chapters. The eminent characters are, for the most part, eminently bad, or even abominably wicked. And when the staple matter of the story is less revolting, it is generally not because there is a better mind or motive, but only because an immense cloak of hypocrisy is habitually drawn over actions, to make them less disgusting, and more decent-looking than they really are. Nothing prodigiously bad is done by many, simply because of the mean, dastardly, selfish spirit which dares not heartily do the evil it thinks. In this view, as I conceive, the major part of man's history is bad—better, therefore, to be forgotten than to be remembered; pitch it down under all-merciful oblivion, and let both sight and smell of it be gone forever. We want a clean atmosphere, and there is no way to give it, but to let the reeking filth and poison pass off. Even if we did not copy so many bad things cramming our memory, it would cost us incredible damage simply to be meeting and taking the look, every moment, of these bad images, whether we copy them or not. We could not be familiar with such types of evil, without being fouled by them, and, therefore, God has mercifully ordained a limbo into which they may be gathered and sunk out of sight. Who could be less than a reprobate, having all the monster villainies of the past ages crowded into his memory, and compelling him to have their touch upon his feeling day and night? But as God has ordered the world, he is all the while making it morally habitable, by successive purgations. He permits us to breathe safely, in permitting us to know almost nothing of the bad past. And the institution of written history does not very much vary our condition. Who of us does not remember instances of very bad and very brilliant men, who were the common talk of their times, but are now less and less frequently mentioned, and will shortly be quite forgot? Good men are not so easily forgotten; partly because they are more rare; partly because they take hold of respect, which is firmer and more fixed than memory; and partly because their good is closer to the principle of immortality, imbibing life therefrom. Hence they stay longer, lingering as benignant stars in the sky, while the bad and wicked are mercifully doomed to make blank spaces for them, and contribute what of benefit they can by their absence. "The name of the wicked shall rot"—this is their gospel; which, if it be wholly negative, is so far grandly salutary.

Consider, also, in this connection, how certainly we create a better past, when the real and frequently bad past dies, or is lost. And for this very purpose it would seem that God has set every thing sliding away into oblivion. He means it for our moral benefit; so that when the actual past is faded away, we may retouch it, or create another, by an idealizing process of our own. We know that other generations have lived before us, and also that we had ancestors, and though we hunt after traditions, and keep family registers, we really know very little more. But we think we know, because we imagine; for our busy imagination begins half unwittingly to fill up our blank spaces with paternities and maternities, and, in fact, with whole populations and ages, such as we can think ideally, and probably a great deal better than the real fatherhoods and motherhoods whose places they occupy. So we get rid of a bad past by oblivion, and set up a good, or at least better one, for ourselves; such as will not harm us to think of, or shame us to remember. And this imaginary fatherhood and people of the past—what reverence do we pay them, in which reverence to be profoundly profited and blessed? What better can a great and worthy filial feeling do than to create and sanctify a great and worthy past? and then, when it is so created and sanctified, what will it more certainly do than to make itself more filial in return, and morally better every way? We do not commonly state the matter in this form. We know the very names of our grandfather and grandmother, and likewise, it may be, even of theirs. So we think we have them, in merely having their names. Doubtless, it is something to have their names, because we may so easily put our own feeling and desire into them; and if we have beside some few scant vestiges of knowledge, these also are dear; but more commonly the names and vestiges we body into men and women have little body, or meaning, or merit, to attract our reverence or support our praise, save as we ourselves give it. And, in just this manner, we have it as one of our delightful occupations to be creating our own grandfathers and grandmothers; and, in fact, the general past we seek to revere. And it is a most excellent opportunity; for these ideal men and women are wholesome to think of, and the more we honor them the more they do for us.

In this manner we get the advantages of a tolerably good world behind us—just such a world as we certainly could not have, but for that ordinance of supreme oblivion that makes room for it. It is a very great thing for us morally that we shape so many ideals, for we escape, in doing it, the awfully foul tyranny of facts; and our ideals are just as much more real than the facts, as they are better and closer to the wants of character. Therefore doubtless it is, that so great liberty is given us in the creating of our own past. We escape thus into another and generally better realm, where the air is more free and the attractions more pure. We have ideal personages with us, and, what signifies much for us, they are at least as good as we most naturally try to think. And they have the greater power and value to us, that they seem to loom up into quality and magnitude out of the unknown, whence we ourselves have evoked them. We see them fringed about with mystery thus, calling them "reverend fathers of mankind." "Whatever is unknown," says the proverb, "we take for something great." Oblivion itself is a great magnifier, raising the names we idealize and idolize into sublimity, by the haze of unknown merit through which it permits us to see them. And the gods of the mythologies appear to have been created largely, thus, out of the unknown reverend fathers idealized—only their sanctities were rubbed off shortly, or defiled, by the gross actualities of practical use.

How far this idealizing method or law is taken advantage of, in a way of supplementing real history, and giving the greater power and value to a few bold touches of narrative than a full circumstantial record could possibly have, may not be at once decided. But we all recognize it as the wondrous felicity of certain characters that we know so little about them, and yet seem to know so much, and that of a type so impressive. We say that we wish it were possible to know more, which is very nearly equivalent, not unlikely, if we could see it, to wishing that we knew less. For if their full story were written, so as to answer all inquiries, and bring all circumstances into light, the additions made would rather stale and flatten the great character than raise it; for one must be a singularly perfect man to be lifted in majesty by picking up the crumbs and saving the small items of his story. What greater injury, in general, can befall a character, than to have its story made up in such nice precision as exactly to meet the little curiosities of little minds? To be so perfectly known argues a sad want of merit, and, if the perfect story is but fiction, amounts to almost a scandal. If Hamlet were known as perfectly, or exhaustively, as some of the critics will show when they make out his story, he would not be Hamlet longer. If

Joan of Arc, not flitting into history and out again, had come abroad duly certificated, with the facts of her biography regularly made up, and all her supposed visitations, revelations, debates, bosom struggles and motives accurately detailed, she would only seem to have been a case for the hospital, and would, in fact, have been sent to the hospital before she reached the field. She struck, she won the post of leadership as in God's mission, because she spoke out of mystery, and took the faith of her time by the spell she wrought in its imagination. And she wins a place with us in the same manner, compelling us to supplement her almost unknown story, by the faiths and admirations challenged by the wondrous, seemingly divine, force of her action. And therefore it is, I conceive, that when God would paint, or have painted, some highest, grandest miracle of character, setting it forth in a way to have its greatest power of impression, he makes large use of oblivion, brushing out and away all the trivialities and petty cumberings of the story. Let the blank spaces be large enough to give imagination play, and, for this, let as much be forgotten as can be, and save the few grand strokes that are to be the determining lines of the picture; let the story be so scantily told that we shall often wonder, and sometimes even sigh, that we have so little of it. Only so could a real gospel be written. What we call our gospel is so written, and no such life as that of a Christ could be otherwise given to the world. A full-written, circumstantial biography would be a mortal suffocation of his power. There was no way but to let oblivion compose a good part of the story. And if we can not imagine oblivion to be inspired, we can perceive it to be one of the grandest of all evidences of inspiration in the writers, that they could not stoop to over-write and muddle their story, by letting their foolish admirations pack it full of detail. How very natural would it have been to write a particular account of the infancy of Jesus, and of the whole thirty years preceding his ministry, telling how he grew, and looked, and acted, and what the people thought of him, calling it perhaps the Vol. I. of his biography. How often have we regretted this missing picture, and longed to have it supplied—with how much real wisdom we can probably see in that foolish Gospel of the Infancy which undertook afterward to supply it. How easily could it have been given by any one of the Evangelists. And yet their whole account of the infancy is made up in a few brief sentences. John, the apostle, had Mary, the mother, with him, we know not how many years, and she told the story over, how tenderly, how many times. He was getting old, too, when he wrote his gospel, and old men are proverbially garrulous; and yet he says not one word of the infancy, or gives any faintest allusion to Mary's conversations. No; he has something great to record here, and something which can be fitly honored only in a few bold strokes of narrative, such as will even make the story idealize itself more vividly than words can describe it. Why should he pile it with cargoes of circumstance, when the world itself could not contain the books, and Christ himself would be written out of his divinity, by an itemizing gospel that proposes to enhance his record. On this principle all the gospels were written. The wonder is, that so much is let go for oblivion when so much could be easily told. And the result is that, being put in this manner to the supplementing ideally of what is so massively, yet summarily, given, we get a Christ who proves himself to our feeling as much by what is not said, but left to our faith to supply, as by what is told in so great brevity and boldness of confidence. The story is told as if it were believed, and had power to make itself believed. I will not say that every great character must be shown as the "Word made flesh" required to be. More of circumstance is permissible in the inferior characters, and consistent with a due respect. Yet even a great, good man, may be sadly weakened by over-remembrance. His moral value depends on his getting far enough into oblivion to be strongly remembered. Not even the sun is half as bright in clear, full day, as when he burns a passage through his clouds, proving his effulgence by the obscuration he has overcome and the close, black setting in which he is envisaged. Nothing is sufficiently revealed which does not refuse to be hid, and has force to burst into knowledge through oblivion —through clouds, through falsifications of enmity and prejudice. On the other hand, nothing is so little known as that which is lugged into knowledge.

Passing hence to other points more promiscuously related to the general subject, it may further increase our good opinion of the moral uses of oblivion, that it sometimes proves and magnifies its consequence by not coming soon enough, or not expunging names and characters that only perpetuate their evil in being remembered. What we call the aristocracies of the world are generally grounded in such. I take no part here as against social and political distinctions because they offend the principle of equality. I speak of aristocracy as a purely moral affair, where its real demerit is commonly overlooked by assailants. Few persons appear, in fact, to make any just observation of the stupendous immorality in which these high conventionalisms have their beginning. Orders might exist in a world not under evil, but orders of caste are based in evil itself, and commonly show it by their origin. Thus, how many noble families in England take their beginning from some castled robber, some wild chieftain or pirate ravaging the seas—any kind of man that was the terror and principal thief of his time, eight hundred or a thousand years ago. Barbarians, men of lust, high wassailers drinking out of the skulls of their victims, freebooters winning a crest by the pillage of a province—any thing is good enough that is bad enough to get a name. And the misery here is that family ambition gets the start of oblivion, and is able, against the laws of Providence, to embalm its founder in the honors of wickedness; which honors of wickedness, having won it a crest, it is very likely to emulate and perpetuate. Hence the generally unmoral or demoralizing power of aristocracy; abjuring, at the beginning, the principles of God and the brotherhood of man, and assuming to be ennobled by wrong. Usurpation is better to it than right, because it gets more play of will in daring insult to right, and asserting its pre-eminence by the self-elation of its manners. There are, I know, many virtuous and really good men in the noble ranks of the world; men who are morally ennobled by their worth and modesty; which signifies a great deal more, and puts them back consentingly into the acknowledged brotherhood of their race. Allowing such exceptions, it is not to be denied, as a matter of history, that the very worst, most hideous, most disgusting crimes ever committed in human society, have been perpetrated under the instigations and within the honored circles of nobility. The wrongs by which these chieftain classes trampled the happiness, and mocked the rights of the inferior orders, in the former ages, make a most sad and revolting chapter of history. Could the broom of oblivion, ordained for wickedness, have only swept away clean the dates and recollections out of which such monsters grew, how great the moral and social benefit that would have followed. Exactly this, most happily, is done for us. We have abundance, doubtless, of noble and even royal blood, sprinkled through our American families, but we do not know it or care for it. All such airy notions of quality and absurdities of date-worship are fenced away from us by walls of oblivion. We have and want no footing but the common brotherhood of man.

All the more hopeful, and brighter in new possibility, is the great moral future before us. Owning God's appointed brotherhood, what shall follow but that we, at last, be grounded filially in his principles. We shall thus achieve a new and better form of society, because oblivion has come to our help, as it has not hitherto, save partially, to the more ancient civilizations of Europe.

Meantime it will be seen that in another department of life, somewhat related, the law that keeps opinion flexible and free has never failed of its office. I speak here of the part which God himself is always maintaining, in the expurgation of history, against what may be called the over-conservative, anti-moral tendencies of many. There is a good and much-wanted conservatism, viz.: that which can bravely withstand precipitate measures, and subversive and wild innovations, sanctifying, in conviction, what conviction has sanctified; but there is also a bad, unmoral, sometimes almost immoral conservatism, which is very different. A certain class of men, without courage, or imagination, or high moral convictions, are never able to see that any thing can be in respect save what is now respectable, and contrive to be always fawning about the idols already set up, with sophistries and cold servilities of argument, that amount to a worship nothing better than hypocrisy. To consider what is wanted, or is true, or in real candor obligatory, is not in them; but they are emulous of selectness or high associations, and think it safer and more skillful to coast along the past, and not strike out where the needle only of responsibility can guide them. These timid Chinese souls are going always to save a Celestial Empire, not to make one; and the danger was that they would get so stunted in courage and imagination, that nothing would be left to carry on the grand progressions of morality—nothing left but a hopelessly effete and lapsed condition, under the tyranny of the past. No greater misfortune to character could befall the world. It was a great problem, therefore, how to keep off this tyrannizing power, and hold the race in courage, forethought, self-determination, and that free advance in truth which is necessary to a great future in character. And here is the meaning, herein lies the value, of that vast, wide-sweeping, almost undiscriminating oblivion that God has let in as a gulf-stream to sweep the past away. Plainly enough he is no conservative in the style of what is commonly called conservatism. He is always letting things come into the world that he will not let stay in it. Almost every thing done here is done for transition, not for stationary fixture. He is always saying, not to old men only, but also to old fact, "pack and be gone, that new fact may come in, finding room and fresh air." He will not let us keep ourselves on hand over-largely, lest, if we remember too much of our past, we get stalled under it, and die before life is ended. A great many things appear to be swept away and lost that we should suppose might be saved, and here and there something is saved that we should think might as well be forgot. We wonder especially that some very bad names are stuck in immortality, as flies in amber, and preserved--only we may note that, as it is without much advantage either to the amber or the flies, but with real advantage to science in both, to have their date and story so registered, so it was necessary that some bad names, such as the Nimrods, and Ahithophels, and Neros, and Borgias might furnish, should stay for long-remembered ages, and allow us to get courage in the discovery, that our own bad men are no new product of our degenerate times, but were even preceded by worse. Be this as it may, we do have it fixed as an impression, and it is an impression that deeply concerns our moral benefit, that nothing has, or ought to have, any sure chance against the broom of oblivion, save what belongs to principle. And even principles will require a great winnowing out of men, and require to be many times winnowed and redeveloped themselves, before they are settled into their true interpretations, and forms, and places. A great many things, we thus perceive, are not to be conserved, but to pass; and we are never to be worried, or thrown out of courage, because even what is good appears to be going; for if the good is making room for what is better, and the admirable for what is more to be admired, what reason have we for regret? Above all, let there be no timid and heartless emulation of past things, taking refuge under them from the bold responsibilities of the present. Let the passing pass, and the great moral ideas keep their ferment a-going, and new life freshening in the world. So much of gospel is there in the dreadfully negative, world-emptying work of oblivion.

And this same lesson accrues, in another way of benefit, to the mitigation of another and less tractable kind of mischief. A certain class of souls that were narrow in quantity, and hot in conviction, were likely to get stalled in bigotry, becoming, in this manner, only haters and extirpators, in the name of duty and religion. If there were some way of becoming thieves, on principle, it would scarcely be worse. For the bigot, sacred as may be his pretensions, and earnest as he appears to be in the uncomfortable heat of his devotion, is nevertheless, in almost every case, a morally sinister and evil-minded person—uncandid, unreasonable, jealous, sometimes treacherous, often sensual, always cruel—all the worse and more thoroughly detestable, that he finds how to marry so much of passion with so much of what he thinks to be conviction. And yet he holds nothing as if it were true, but every thing as if it were false; that is by his will made fierce by his passion. Now this kind of character was going to be one of the greatest dishonors and pests of a moral system and of moral society. Medicines for such were therefore wanted, and what better could there be than this grand narcotic of oblivion, that buries, in unwaking sleep, so many idols, and so many bloody and fierce champions, that all may be forgot together. If contending earnestly, as they say, for the faith, they really had faith and not merely contention, it would be well, but they make a most sad figure when we look upon them, burning down their life so often to a cinder. without even a spark of that fire that is kindled by God's love in the breast. If such men had the world to themselves, they would make a hell-state in society, more pitiless and fierce, and further off from heaven's principle, than a good many prison wards where felons congregate. How much easier, too, is it for souls under evil to become extirpators than brothers in candor and sacrifice! It will not even cost the necessity of a conversion. How mild and beautiful a ministry for them is God's deep gulf, down which they are dropping into silence and out of remembrance. A world to make the bigot more absurd than this, I think could not well be contrived.

I must not omit to mention, last of all, the very important change produced in the moral temper of our world under evil, by so many desolations and blank spaces in its historic map and annals. We move, and are largely moved, in the moral life, as in masses,—that is, by cities, by nations, by empires—for what we think and feel in such high airs of consequence and confidence, when we are bodied in some great realm or people—our pride, conceit of power, ambition, untamable will—passes into our moral temper as individuals, and casts the habit, to a great extent, of our character itself. Therefore as we have free license to do as we will, by states, or empires, or churches, it becomes necessary to put these in ward, and temper them by needful corrections. And when we let our thought run over so many mere bird-tracks of oblivion etched on the map of history, what a picture do we see, and what sad tokens of remembrance, nearly expired, do we there recall. The great North African Church, stretching along the whole south coast of the Mediterranean—where is it, by what single vestige is it discovered? And where is the world-famous Church of Alexandria? where the great Syrian, centered at Antioch? and the Church of Asia Minor, centered at Ephesus? If we call over the roll of the great cities, Thebes stands mute in stone, speaking no more. Great Carthage is almost as difficult to find as the body of Hannibal. Tyre has forgotten her merchants of old, as completely, indeed as to have a people any more. Palmyra was discovered in the eighteenth century; Babylon and Nineveh have just been dug up. The cities of the Aztecs are overgrown rock-formations, where forests luxuriate as naturally as they do on the world's geological strata. If we speak of temples and monuments, the stones of the Incas remain, but the Titans that piled them are gone. The pyramid-temple of Cholula remains, but nobody can tell how it was used. The great mountain heaps of Egypt lift their tops as high as ever, but the stern old victor, Oblivion, has pressed in between the monuments and the monarchs they were to commemorate, thrusting these away out of remembrance, and leaving those to be mere piles of stones. And so it is of the empires; all the great empires of the East and South, and also of our own, falsely called *new*, West. Some of them we can locate, some of them we can trace by their marks, but can not even guess their names.

What pride was there now in all these cities, temples, monuments, and empires, and what figure were they to make in the immortal ages of the future! But how humble, and cheap, and almost foolish they look! And this same power of oblivion has us all in hand in the same manner, to do with us just as it will, and what traces of our name and fame are to be left, I do not know. What we built, whither we marched, where we fought, and whom we conquered, and the great leaders we honored with triumph—we really do not like to think that oblivion will carry all these away; perhaps it will not for a very long time, but there is a very long time coming, which may be so long that nobody will name any more these proud things, or even know what people lived here. Or we may imagine, without being very absurd, that Philadelphia will sometime be dug over to find the marbles of Washington. It may take a million of years to bring such things to pass, but our great teacher, Oblivion, is long-breathed, and will not have his lesson soon ended. And how very weak and small does our high public figure appear in the presence of such examples from the past. We slink back into ourselves, instructed and humbled. It is not so proud a thing to figure out our little day here as we sometimes try to imagine. The contact now of any great principle which is everlasting, or of God, who is the soul's Eternal Rock and Friend—how grand a thing it is, compared with any such pompous and puffy airs in the trivialities of empire and victory. "So foolish was I and ignorant, I was as a beast before thee. Nevertheless, I am continually with thee!"

V.

OF PHYSICAL PAIN.

We recoil instinctively from pain as a matter of experience, and only somewhat less from it as a subject. As it is a hard, ungenial fact, so it is a kind of surd to us, unreducible by thought, and generally unattractive. If we take it, too, in the larger view, as including the pains of animals, our first look stumbles us, and we naturally enough prefer to leave it under the chloroform of silence. The physiologists and physicians are obliged, of course, to give it their attention. A matter so pungently real, and filling so large a place in the physical economy, must be abundantly investigated. The nerve-tracks by which it comes and goes, and the disorders it reports, in this or that part of the body, must be studied, and all the pathologic symptoms and therapeutic possibilities must be sought out. But here the inquiry ends, unless we include the fact that the theologians find something to say of the origin of pain, and the penal offices it fills in supplying the necessary sanctions of divine government. But the really great question, that which overtops all others—the question of moral benefit to the subjects, and to the world generally—is passed by, as far as I can discover, in almost total inattention. One little book I hear of, in a foreign tongue, that, judging from the title, may be an attempt of the question; but apart from this, I find scarcely a trace of thought or inquiry on the subject. A fact the more remarkable, that we are attempting so eagerly and treating so profusely almost every kind of subject, whether practical or merely curious. Is it because this question of uses is too pungently moral? or is the disinclination toward it created by the fact, that, taken largely, as including the general economy of pain, the question is felt to be wholly mysterious and really impossible? I can not pretend that I suffer no such feeling myself; but I find it in my field, and therefore will not shrink from it. That I can bring it to a full solution I have really no confidence; I only hope to suggest some practical aspects of the points involved that may be useful, and, to a certain extent, satisfactory.

Entering this field, about the first thing we meet is the reminder of those remarkable words of the apostle when he says—"the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." He uses words of largest import, and, as if outreaching the sense of his time, shows, not the living world only, but the whole creation groaning—the rocks themselves groaning before the animals, and the animals sinking into rock in groans, before man comes to his groaning life, as the superior occupant; all travailing, as it were, productively and travailing together; not merely now but "until now"—even from the first incipiency of chaos or nebular condensation, down through all progressive dates of order, and disorder, and providential history, and redemptive suffering, till this present hour. The world, in short, symbolizes pain even from the first; begins to be a habitation of pain as soon as it has any kind of inhabitant; becomes a habitation for the pains of intelligence when intelligence arrives, and continues to be as long as it stays.

In this very impressive fore-glimpse of the subject, two points are suggested that we set our negative upon, before raising the question of use. (1.) That a world so pierced and threaded by pain is not made by God immediately for himself, or to gratify his own tastes and dispositions. Mere pain is barren and valueless taken by itself—he can find no revenue in it. He can value it only as it is valuable to his subjects; and it has no value to them, save as they have wants of character that can be faithfully met by such rugged kind of discipline. (2.) That the condition of pain is not a result posterior in date to the fall or sin of mankind—no miracle of retribution, by which, as the world is blasted and stuck with thorns, human bodies are also pricked with torments. The pains of animals, existing before, as in symbol and also in fact, may have been dependent, as in reason, on the superior race that were to come and the sin they would commit, and in that sense doubtless were posterior; for how often do we see that things are prior in time which are *post* in reason. This indeed is the very highest distinction of high counsel, that it prepares a future and deals with it before it arrives—which prior dealing is just as truly *post* in order, as if it were *post* in time. And then, if it should be expressly described as having followed in time, and as being a result of causation, or miraculous sentence, a very great truth would be affirmed in perhaps the best and only feasible manner; for the prior dealing is really caused by the future condition it was preparing to meet. Thus if truly the whole creation was groaning, in all orders and degrees, from the rocks upward, before the arrival of the occupant and his sin, prefiguring and symbolizing the great, sad history to come, and preparing fit environment for it, what so true method of telling his story as to show him unparadising his paradise, and provoking against himself, or creating for himself, the many thousand pangs inserted beforehand for his discipline. If I build a house in July for the winter to come, the winter will be shaping that house before the day of cold arrives. If there were no winter to come it would be a different house. Even so a world that is made for evil will be such as evil requires it to be, and one of the best descriptions, nay, the only feasible description of it that could be given to a rude age, would be that which tells how it was new-stamped by evil and configured retributively to it. All this with the better truth and propriety, that our sorrows and pains exist only as in germs at the first, and are never actually developed in experience, till it is done by the sin itself and the retributive action of causes upon it.

But these are points which have only a casual relation to the main subject, viz.: the question of use. Assuming here that pain is for man, the question is, How? in what offices and uses? And here we cut off, at the beginning, three or four several answers, that plainly are not sufficient.

1. It is nothing to say, or show, that being made sensitive to pain in certain organs and parts of the body, we are by that means secured against other bodily pains and damages more fatal. Thus the eye, it may be said, is offended by any disagreeable sensation, and so closed up against the fumes of acid, or clouds of lime-dust, in which it is enveloped. In the same way, the fingers are plaited at their ends with a texture of fine-woven nerve, that makes them exceedingly sensitive in the matter of touch, and even the whole skin is so inlaid with nerve as to be a covering of sensibility wrapped about the body; and thus it goes into the world with a self-conserving instinct on the outlook, which notifies it of danger, and keeps it from fatal damage. Otherwise we might tear ourselves against every thorn or briar, and might even hold our limbs in the fire till they were burnt off; for the more inward parts of the body are comparatively inapprehensive, and would never take care of themselves. But it does not follow that actual pain is for the conservation of the body—the facts referred to are not large enough to support any so broad conclusion. The showing is not, in the first place, that pain keeps the body safe, but only that sensitiveness to pain, apprehensiveness working preventively, in the organs of sense and the skin, keeps it alive, so far, to dangers that may invade the surfaces; next, that all the principal and worst pains we suffer are not of the apprehen

sive and cautionary parts, but of the inward parts, and are such as have been produced by some kind of lesion or disorder—no mere notifiers of harm, but harm itself —pains of the flesh, and bones, and marrow ; pains of the head, and feet, and teeth, and lungs, and liver; neuralgic torments, combustions of fever-heat, chills of ague, rheumatisms, gouts, horrors. These are the pains, not the sentinels to keep off pain; and these stay by, and ache, and burn, and lengthen out the groans of their victims, and do not spare. Doubtless the sentinels referred to are doing beneficent service, but what beneficent use have these—the long, appalling, dreary catalogue?

2. It is no sufficient or complete account of pain to say that it serves economic uses, or the maintenance of economic functions, in the body; closing up valves, stopping secretions, gathering up ulcerations that will work off and separate disorders that might otherwise be fatal; contracting the muscles in spasmodic throes, for the mechanical detrusion of stone, or gravel, or the violent ejection of poisons. All such pains are nature's labor, it may be said, the *conatus* by which it struggles to clear and restore itself. How is it then with pains that expel nothing and rectify nothing? pains of the head and the bones, which expel neither brains nor marrow, pains of the heart which commonly create worse pains till death ensues? pains of pleurisy that end in suffocation? all pains that kill and work no benefit—which is the natural and frequent result? Is it any better for a broken tooth or broken limb, that it

aches? Besides, if we imagine some *conatus* of the body, in such cases, striving to clear, or to heal itself, is it not found that chloroform, stopping the pain, allows the supposed *conatus* still to go on, just as before! Of what use then is the pain? Again:—

3. It is nothing to say, that pain is wanted to set off and make duly appreciable the advantages of exemption from pain. Dr. Paley, recurring once and again to this kind of argument, appears to have more satisfaction in it than it deserves. Not even the comforters of Job could have offered him more dismal consolation than to show him how kindly God was putting his plague upon him, that he might know the very great blessedness of being clear of it! And yet we are told by this very eminent teacher, that "pain has the power of shedding a satisfaction over intervals of ease which few enjoyments exceed. * * A man resting from the stone, or the gout, is, for the time, in possession of feelings which undisturbed health cannot impart. * * I am far from being sure that a man is not a gainer by suffering a moderate interruption of bodily ease for a couple of hours out of the four-and-twenty." A very "moderate interruption" it must certainly be. We are not fond of learning how to be happy by being made miserable. The true question is, why God does not make us happy by happiness? Doubtless it is a fact, that light and shade and lines of contrast do instruct our apprehensions of things, and make us more keenly appreciative. In this manner, evidently, God could make us value immensely a very little and

short respite from pain; but that single minute's respite will be no sufficient compensation for a dreadful campaign of suffering continued through whole years. Or if we speak of the goodness put in evidence, it would take but a very little goodness—with a sufficient quantity of pain—to be even infinitely good. Meantime the real question is, why we suffer any pain at all?

4. It can not be said, as being any sufficient account of pain, that it belongs inherently to animal natures. Thus it is conceivable that friction pertains inherently to mechanism, by a necessary law, and so it may be imagined that pain belongs to all sentient beings because they are sentient—that the ancient, extinct races of geology were in this manner subject to death, and that all animate races now existing suffer pain and die in the same manner. Pain, it may also be said, belongs to them all, as being temporary natures; in that fact liable to pain and death, as they are to exhaustion, or the decrepitude which must needs attend the expiration of their term. I think it must be admitted, that all pain can be thus accounted for on the ground of absolute necessity, if only we consent to lose, or give up, the faith of a God; for the argument is good only when it is taken atheistically. Thus if animal bodies are self-existent, or products of fate, or chance, that may as easily be true of pain; for the necessity of which they are born may be as good to account for their suffering. But if we begin at the belief in God—infinitely good, infinitely wise and

powerful--such a being can make animals certainly that are under no necessity either of dying or suffering. He cannot, it is true, do any thing which is impossible, anything in the sphere of the unconditional, which is inherently beyond power. But that is not true of any animal nature; it belongs to the world of contrivance and conditionality, not to the world of necessity. The question therefore is, how a God, creating animals and men, can allow them to be subject to pain? And it is no answer to say that they must be. If there be no God, then it may be so; if there is, then why and how can it be?

So far we obtain no real solution of pain at all, and there is no solution plainly to be obtained, that does not go above the consideration of mere physical necessities and uses. It exists for uses purely moral, and we get no shadow of reason for it, till we ascend to the higher plane of moral ideas and the scheme of religious discipline by which God undertakes their enforcement. And here we meet considerations like these:—

1. There is a pain which belongs to the mind itself, in the consciousness of evil, which would almost necessarily prick through into the body, and which really needs, in the way of moral advantage, to be interpreted to the mind by the body. And this is the very idea of penalty or pain [*pœna*], that it is a bad mind stung with moral pain, which pain is answered, interpreted, made more pungently just, by the pains of a disordered body. We all agree that moral wrong, or sin, begets, and must beget, a pain of the mind which we call re-

morse, and that sc the mind has a kind of moral government in its own nature. But there is apt to be a limit in this very subtle kind of trouble ; it begins ere long to blunt the sensibility, and work a state of moral apathy. Besides, there is a wondrous power of sophistry in evil, by which it covers itself over with pretexts, and puts on even the semblances of good. Hence there was a clear necessity that souls in evil should be pierced and pinned through by arguments in the feeling, which can not be turned by any kind of sophistry, or glozed by any lapse into habitual stupor. What is wanted is, that some sharp, ineradicable torment shall prick into sensibility, and keep just conviction alive. And exactly this will be done by physical pain, which no mental apathies or sophistries can evade. Almost every kind of evil, too, runs to sensuality, and drugs the soul in that manner, and what can better expel the narcotic fumes of the body, than pangs that are always shooting in their twinges to keep it alive, and be interpreters of guilt, just where again it might very soon be smothered.

All physical pain is so far penal; penal, that is, not in the sense that the pains of the body exactly match the guilt of the mind, or exactly match the particular comparative deserts of persons. Some persons really want more pain than others, and some very good persons will utilize a vastly greater amount than others less deserving can. The pains all come, be they many or few, in the lines of justice, only they do not here, in our present wicked state, conform exactly to the measures, or keep the proportions of justice. Generally it is not a matter of so much importance that we have them in ourselves, in some given degree, as that we have them in the world. Some persons will be more beneficially affected by seeing what others suffer, than they would in suffering as much themselves; indeed they may even suffer more pungently themselves, that they have their natural sympathies so tenderly pained. The great thing is that pain is in the world by God's right sentence upon it, and we know, as certainly as we do the goodness of God, that it is the interpreter of wrong—God's moral sentence felt, beheld, everywhere present, the frown of his abhorrence to wrong, the pungent witness of our guiltiness.

2. Pain is a matter of great consequence in the fact that it gives a moral look and capacity of moral impression to the world, of which it would otherwise be totally vacant—a similar impression also of the benignity of God. If we had the world only for a garden or a landscape, if it meant nothing but what it is in production, or the delectation of the senses—a place of good feeding, and health, and jocund life—it would be God's pasture only, not his kingdom. Moral ideas would not even be suggested by it. But the simply finding pain in it puts us on a wholly different construction, both of it and of life. Now there appears to be something serious on hand. The severity bears a look of principle and law, and the unsparing rigors, hedging us about, tell of a divine purpose and authority that respect high reasons, and are able to be immovably

faithful in their vindication. In this manner pain changes the whole import and expression of our moral sphere. Every pain strikes in, touching the quick of our remorse, and giving it practical sanction. We can not look about on such a spectacle of groaning, writhing members as the world exhibits, and think of it as being any way reconcilable with God's perfect fatherhood, without perceiving that there is a moral frame about the picture, that it means eternal government and responsibility to God.

Having so great an effect on the world, it also has, we have already intimated, a correspondent effect on the attitude and even the accepted idea of God. As the world is, so also is God; for the world is but the shadow of God. But the impressions we obtain of God are varied by the fact of pain, principally as respects his goodness. If there were no mixtures of pain in our human experience, we should have no possible conception of severity in his goodness, but should think of it as being a disposition simply to gratify, and keep in terms of comfort or pleasure. But the stern, fixed element of pain—if this be good, then it is in goodness to be firm, unsparing, experimentally and dreadfully sovereign. Such goodness, shooting in such pangs, and searching a way by them into all inmost secrets of evil, is how very different from that unmoral goodness that is only concerned to please. How fearfully earnest, and pure, and holy, must it be, to have such abhorrences witnessed by such pains. These pains, too, must be somehow the result of retributive causes—we cannot think otherwise—and our feeling undergoes a change that answers exactly to the moral effectiveness given to public law by decisive, faithfully executed punishments. What the State is doing in such terrible emphasis, mustering its judicial wrath up even to the pitch of capital execution, must, we feel, express the opinion it has of law, and the moral sacredness of law. Doubtless the murderer could be kept safe without being hurled out of life; others could be measurably deterred, at least, by a milder punishment; and yet the question of death-sentences is not ended; for the main thing to be secured is moral impression, impression for law, and only some tremendous shock, it may be, can sufficiently do it. The mere deterring of crime is nothing, as compared with something done to make crime felt, or, what is nowise different, to make felt the sacredness of law as a power that shelters the world. And what shall do it but to sometimes see society forgetting all softness, and resolutely set on doing only damage, the last extreme of damage. So in this article of pain, God's rectoral goodness works by damage. Pains are his silent thunderbolts, shooting in the sense he has of law, and they are expected to consecrate law in men's feeling the more powerfully, that his tenderly benignant nature breaks into such damage in them—just damage it is true, yet real, purposed damage. What an opinion of wrong and of law does he thus imprint on our feeling, by his seemingly strange work in the pains. Still we call him good, and have only the more tremendously deep sense of his goodness, that we find him good enough to sharpen these pungent woes of damage in our bodies. It is eternal tenderness, iron-clad for the right.

3. It is another and very important moral effect of pain, that it softens the temperament, or temper, of souls under evil, and puts them in a different key. Thus it will be seen, that, in all cases of long-continued and very severe suffering, there is a look of gentled, perhaps we should say, broken, feeling. The gait is softer, the motions less abrupt, and there is a lingering moan we fancy in the voice, and a certain dewy tremor of tear in the eye. It is as if the man's willfulness had been tempered down, or at least partly broken. He may be to us a stranger, yet we see by all his demonstrations that he has come out of the fire, and is tempered to the sway of many things he can not resist. Thus it is that a great many of the best and holiest examples of piety are such as have been tried and finished in the crucible of suffering. Or, if we speak of the race at large, how very often, and how far, are they tempered to the sway of duty by the fact, or consciousness, that they have not been and can not be superior to pain. Had we all been trained in a condition of perfect immunity from it, how intractable and wild in comparison should we be—even like those millennial monsters of will and lust that lived before the flood. They had great advantages over us, no doubt, in their healthiness and the immense titanic vigor of their constitutions, but ten times as many pains with one-tenth as many years, would have been a far better endowment. Have we not a little more to say of the respectability of good health, than the sober-

est and deepest observation will justify? Good health in evil is not specially respectable, and we see by the multitudes of pains God puts upon us, that his opinion of it is abundantly qualified.

4. It appears to have been necessary for the best effect of pain, that it should be a liability of the whole mundane system, and be, in that manner, a kind of general sacrament for the world. It might have been confined to human beings, and to them who have become old enough to be responsible, and to be responsible in just such a degree as matches their sin, but no such limitation is observed. It is put upon the harmless, unoffending age of infancy. It is the lot of all animate creatures without exception, for whatever lives must die, and whatever dies must be subject to pain. Many vegetable growths give tokens of sensibility, which supposes a liability to pain—and if they all, as a class, are exempt, they compose about the only class of substances that are wholly clear of the sad implication; for the very rocks of the world, as already suggested, are monuments of buried pain, themselves also racked and contorted, as if meant to be lithograph types of the general anguish. The meaning is, plainly enough, that pain shall set up its flag on the world, and by some mysterious right claim ownership.

Now, it is of this that we are specially ready to complain. If only the guilty were required to suffer, we could justify it, but why should this bad liability be laid upon the poor animals, who have done no wrong to make it just? We are not satisfied, we sometimes say, and can not make it seem worthy of a good being. A great many strike out straightway into atheism, for they say that, in this pain of animals, it is proved beyond dispute than no principle of right, or of just moral distribution, governs the world—only fateful chance, or, what is more exact in this case, fateful mischance casts the die for pain. Moral government is out of the question, for what can a moral governor be doing in such plain violation of right? The argument here is a large one, that can not be exhausted in our present restricted limits; but three points duly observed will not only clear the bad impeachment, but reveal the fact of a grand, far-reaching positive benefit, without which the moral uses of the world would even be incomplete.

First observe that a great part of the suffering of animals, just that part which most offends our feeling, is caused by the abuse and cruelty of man, and that there is no more reason to accuse the right of Providence in allowing man to injure the animals, than there is in allowing him to injure and cruelly torment his fellow-man. By the supposition he is to act morally, and then if, using that liberty, he will do wrong, somebody —animals, or men, or both—must suffer the wrong done. The very scheme of morality and responsible action implies a power to create suffering, and just so far a liability to suffer. Only in one of two ways, therefore, could this liability of animals to suffer be avoided; either man must have no moral liberty, or else he must have no animals. In the former case he would not be a man morally—capable of character; in the latter he would not be a man bodily—capable of life; for it is a matter of doubt whether he could even live without their fertilizing and co-operative aid.

Next observe that animals are things, and not in any such relation to God as to have a moral right against pain. They have no moral ideas, and can not be morally wounded. It is only we that are morally wounded when they are cruelly treated—what they suffer is only so much of physical subtraction from their comfort. In this view nothing more appears to be required, in respect to their existence, than that they should have some fit benefit, or advantage in it. If they are made to suffer some pain, wholly irrespective of their own desert, it must not be forgotten that, morally speaking, they have no desert, and are nowise conscious of any. They are so far furniture only, and furniture is not in court for the redress of its abuses. Besides, if they are sometimes abused, how much oftener are they provided for, labored for, and served by whole months of drudgery—no herd or flock ever suffering for its owner a thousandth part of what he suffers for them. They have their pains and distresses too, apart from all abuse, and if they have them still, under the solidarity principle that links their fortunes with his, is it not that he may let forth his sympathies more tenderly toward them, and give them as great benefit as he receives at their cost? And if he finds them fellow-partners with him, suffering innocently with him in his lot, they will less need comfort than he, and will only show, by their clinging still to life, that they have comfort enough, in having it valuable as it is.

Thirdly, the fact that all the world is made to follow the fortunes of man and, in some sense, go down with him and groan with him in his evil, is a fact that carries with it an immense power of moral benefit. No matter if the pains are initiated long ages before his arrival, still they are just as truly for him and from him as if they had come after, and had come of being simply horror-smitten with him by his wrong. He is finally to have the general lordship, and a vast, all-ruling sympathy fills and configures the world to his fortunes; so that what he is to be and want in himself, he shall see in the creatures that have sad company with him. The poor animals, looking up to him in their sorrow, are to say, "We are with you, only we ask some tender recognition of our suffering for you." And what can have a more subduing effect on his feeling than to see the mute creation groaning with him—types of pain filling all tiers and orders of substance up to the stars, and holding forth their mirror to his pity. This grand sacrament of pain is ever with him, saying, "This is my body that you have broken." I do not say that we are putting the matter always in this form. It may even seem to have more of fancy in it than of fact. I only mean to say that the world is so tempered to us, when we think not of it, bearing a look of sympathy, suffering common disaster and judgment with us, provoking tenderness by its broken fortunes and forlorn appeals. How much better it is for us than a world all bright and smiling and painless would be, it will be difficult for us even to conceive.

I have spoken thus largely of the pains of animals, because the impeachment of Providence on account of them is so very common, and so very unjust. They are even a necessary part of God's moral economy, as we can easily see. Only it remains to be added that, when all cruelty to animals is done away, and we learn to have them in due care and tenderness, yielding them true sympathy, as partakers in our sad fortunes, they will yield us lessons of benefit more and more touching, and closer to the fineness of a genuinely perfected character.

The pains of infancy have their uses and solutions in much the same manner. These we can see are even physiologically derived to them by inheritance, and it is not to be doubted that immense moral benefits will accrue to them forever after, from the pains they suffered in their innocence here, whether for a longer or a shorter time. And how powerful is their mute appeal to natural affection, when looking up in their moments of distress, they seem to ask imploringly—"Who is it? whence and why does it come?" The pitying mother had perhaps never any such thought as that her own liabilities include both her and her child, and yet the pang that comes back from her child has a moral vigor somehow in it that she feels in tenderly remorseful, persuasively bitter compunction.

5. It is a very important use of pain, that it prepares some of the highest possibilities and most fruitful occasions of character. It never misses observation that pain is the pungent educator of that sturdiest and most sublime virtue, fortitude. Danger is the educator of courage, and pain of this other twin principle, not infe-

rior; and between them both God finds motive enough to justify much terrible severity of schooling. To bear, and dare—these two great lessons are among the chief moral uses of life; and, if he could not give them, he would think it better for us and a more true honor that we be excused from living altogether. If we could neither be martyrs, nor heroes, the highest inspirations would be needless, and nothing would be left us but to earn the common rewards of duty by common drudgeries in it.

Sympathy, also, and all the virtues fitly called graces, that keep it company, and all the works by which it ministers, begin at the fact of pain. Even animals will rush to one of their kind who is howling for some terror, or moaning for some present distress. And this natural kind of sympathy, based in mere instinct, becomes charity in the higher plane of Christian feeling and sacrifice. Therefore, when Christ came into the world, the world's pains first of all took hold of him. At that point his sacrifice began, and there all sacrifice begins. God might reveal his bounty by bounty bestowed, and so far might reveal his love; but there would not be much meaning in the love, if it did not come to pain and minister in sacrifice to it. Nay, it can be worthily and fitly revealed only as it comes through pain, and bears the burden of pain. And it will not even be revealed by that, save when it bears the inflictions of wrong, for the benefit of wrong-doers and enemies themselves. Pain, therefore, is the possibility of all that lies in sacrifice, because it is the possibility of disinterested sympathy, and so of all self-sacrifice. No world that God has made ought ever to want redemption; but if it does, there ought to be and must be a vast comprehension of pain let down upon it. It need not crucify, but it will, and since it will, the love that bears so much of enemies will best reach it. And so there is launched upon us, in Christ's descent to the world, his miracles of healing, his words of comfort to creatures in sorrow, his suffering of death at the hands of his enemies—all included in the one word sacrifice—the full out-beaming fact of the love of God. And in the same manner, under the same conditions, we ourselves are to be fashioned and perfected in the graces of the divine love, by the burdens we bear and the sacrifices we support, whether for other men's pains, or the pains they inflict upon us.

The very comforting conclusion to which we are brought by these inquiries is, that pain, which seems to be no truth, and as far as teaching is concerned, quite meaningless to thought, is yet no barren evil. It is wholly mute, felt only in some hidden center of flesh or bone, giving no lectures, forming no arguments or propositions, pointing no definite reproofs, and yet there is nothing in all our experience, that changes so many aspects of things, and is so grandly productive, so fertile in good. After all, there is no unreason which it does not somehow contrive to correct, no right argument which it does not uphold, no lesson which it does not find how to give, no temper which it does not incline to the truth. It is God's mute prophet in the body, giving there its mighty, silent oracles to the soul.

We sometimes shudder at the extremities of agony we see, and ask how it is possible for a good being to sharpen such pangs in a creature bearing his image, but the true solution is that he is good enough to do it and not spare, faithful enough to work out his problem of character, by such painful kind of surgery. If we shudder still before him, it is the tremendous benignity and sovereign fertility of his working that we shudder at. Far better is it and worthier, to confide and acquiesce; for he is only the higher in good that he can be appallingly good.

The great practical matter, the point whither we are come, and where we may sit down, is that finding how to suffer well is a thing to be much studied and faithfully learned. Passivity is not the true lesson; for a bulrush bowing to the wind could take that lesson as well; neither is it to brace up all our force in a tough strain of stoical energy, refusing to feel; but it is to set our whole activity quietly, manfully, down upon the having well learned what our fiery teacher will show us. To wade through months of pain, to spin out years of weariness and storm, can be done triumphantly only by such as can resolutely welcome the discipline their nature wants. And the man or woman who has learned to suffer well has gotten the highest of mortal victories. Great works are often romantic because of their magnitude, and the fleshly nature itself, kindled with enthusiasm, bears up the undertaker and keeps his vigor good; but in the long-drawn months or years of inevitable pain, where there is no castle without to be carried as by storm, but only a dull blind nature to be fertilized within—there to hold a placid mind, and to keep firm grapple with the agony, is to be equal to a great occasion, as few men ever can be. And if God by any severity of discipline can bring us up to this pitch of heroical suffering, he will have made as much of our human nature as it is capable of becoming.

It will be permitted, in closing this article, to suggest that our natural theologians, in their argument from nature for the goodness of God, commonly, if not always, fall into a large mistake. Their plan or prescribed sphere of argument very nearly compels it. The problem is to prove the required fact out of nature itself, and without going above the range of her mere physical appointments. They are shut down thus below the range of moral ideas, and away from all ends of moral and religious discipline. Whether so understanding their problem or not, they do, in fact, endeavor to make out a goodness that consists in providing means of happiness, comforts, bounties, delectations, pleasures, feedings for waste, lubrications for friction, sleep for exhaustion, healings for wounds, and the like. Physical arrangements for physical ends compose the staple of their argument. How little they can make of pain in this manner is evident. They can show that there are sentinels in our bodies to keep us away from pain, doing it by smaller twinges of pain. They can show, perhaps, that we have a great deal more pleasure than pain, and so make out a balance for the divine goodness; as if it stood in casting a balance between what God gives and what God fails to give. They can challenge any one to show, on the contrary, that any single thing is made to create pain, or any single member to ache, no matter what pains or aches may actually come. Be all this as it may, there is abundance of pain which omnipotence might certainly avert. Besides it is damage, indivertibly sent, coming visibly by no mistake, and comprehending all sentient creatures from the highest to the lowest. The whole creation is put groaning and travailing together in it. Taking the world then as a machine contrived for happy sensation, or for mere economic uses, it is plainly a most absurd failure; no machine invented by man was ever kept in use under such failure. To say that such broad seas of suffering rolling over the world are mischances not preventable, is about as sore an impeachment of the divine capacity, as it could be of the divine intention to say that they are meant with no concern beyond the damage created.

Besides, if the argument for goodness were made out thus in terms of mere physical computation, it would only show that God is concerned to have us fare well or happily, in the plane of physical experience. He would be good as being in good nature, or, at most, as being morally engaged to keep us in comfort. But this is not the goodness of God, or any but a very faint approximation. There is truly but one kind of moral goodness, and it is the same in all moral beings, the created and the uncreated. But in every grade of being, it will require acts and works, and demonstrations according to its rank or quality, or office. Moral goodness in mere subjects will be summed up in obedience or duty. But as certainly as it rules in God, it will make him a Ruler, even as he is elected to be by his own everlasting supereminence and capacity. And so, in him, it will be rectoral goodness. And then, as acts of damage by us to wrong-doers would be sin, so they may even be required of him, because he is in government, as we are not. If he can not minister pain therefore, he can not rule, and can not be good enough to fill his supreme office. But if he can, if with all paternities, all tenderest, most personal love in his feeling, he still can be so faithful in rule as to bend himself to the instigations of pain, passing his own nature through a kind of Gethsemane of revulsion to do it, that in him is Rectoral Goodness—nothing short of which is really divine. The kind of goodness therefore attempted so generally by our natural theologians would not be the goodness of God, and he would not be set in godship by it. To be good for him, is to be rectorally good; that is, to be capable of majesty, capable of wielding and ministering pain, and faithful enough to do it. And so it is that by this fact of pain, we arrive at the only sufficient discovery of the goodness of God. He could not be more tenderly close to us or more adorably great, than he is in this most earnest way of fidelity. Probably every physical pain we suffer is to him a moral pain, that would to us be manifold heavier. Let us have some proof then of his goodness that makes him good enough to bear the sword and be God, good enough to rule in the grand fidelities of pain.

VI.

OF PHYSICAL DANGER.

It must strike almost any person, at times, as a thing paradoxically strange, that in the realm of God, a being confessedly good above all measure and degree, there should be a feeling of insecurity or apprehensiveness so nearly universal; as if unknown dangers were lurking for us everywhere, and perils waiting for the spring. Had any man his house full of guests, accepted each in trust by his hospitality, and were they all the while in visible concern for their safety—haunted by strange noises in the night, flitting about the halls, whispering and gesticulating at the doors of their chambers, setting watches in the corridors and stairways, sometimes breaking into panic and rushing out into the street, talking always in a manner of concern when together, and when they go abroad telling everywhere the dreadful apprehensions they live in—he would certainly take it as a sore affront or cruel impeachment. And yet there is no phase of mortal sentiment in the world so prevalent, or so nearly universal, as that apprehensiveness which we name by the word *danger*. We are all upon the watch for it, ready to catch the least intimation of it, ready sometimes to be rushed into any wildest panic to escape it; a condition of things, we may see at a glance, in which it is clear that God has us in discipline and not in hospitality. Enough, too, that the discipline is salutary, however little complimentary to himself. All the more impressive, too, is his fidelity, that he has even made an institute of danger, and set it in the very cast of his mundane economy. Let us see if we can discover the benefit he intends for us in it.

There is nothing so indubitably real as danger, and yet there is nothing more difficult if we attempt to define it. Thus if it is evil actually coming or to come, then it is fact; and if it is evil not coming, as in fact, then there is no danger of its coming; so that fact or no fact is the whole matter, and the danger is nothing. No, it is not the whole: we may be ignorant enough to be concerned lest the evil thought of may be coming, when we do not know that it actually is or actually is not, and our unknowingness will itself keep us in the sense of danger. Strictly speaking, danger is subjective only; save that we certainly know there are causes at work in great power, a little way back of our ignorance, that make our apprehensive feeling rational. And it is these apprehensive torments of unknowingness that we call danger. God is doing facts and we are thinking dangers; and his facts, considering that we can know so little what they are to be, suffice to keep us, and are meant to keep us, in a mood of apprehensiveness—all the while conversant with danger.

Consider a moment how this feeling of danger is instigated, or by how many factors working together it is kept in wakeful sensibility. (1.) We are in wrong, and therefore tempered apprehensively, looking every way after some evil to come, such as we consciously deserve. A sound is in our ears when there is no sound; we flee when no man pursueth. (2.) We are ignorant, and ignorance under evil is even more apprehensive than knowledge, raising more ghosts often than there are facts of retribution. (3.) There are terrible powers working with terrible energy about us; and we know that when they overtake us, or we fall in their way, they will not spare. They work by laws, and laws we understand will never be adjourned or moved aside for our accommodation. They are lictors all of retribution; and the danger is not that they will possibly, or by some mischance, fall in our way, but that they are actually on our track, and will certainly overtake us shortly. And furthermore, (4.) there are grounds of distrust and concern secreted everywhere, so to speak, in the world's bosom, on purpose apparently to keep us to our caution, and forbid our possible security—mirages in the air, poisons in woods and flowers, green-covered morasses and quicksand bottoms that will drop us down out of sight, if we trust a foot on them; atmospheric breathings of ague, miasmatic infections and hidden death-plagues burdening the night; horses that have death in their heels, tigers ravening in the wood, roaring lions that frighten us by their noise, and lions more terrible because they are silent, roaring not at all. We are the more fearful, too, sometimes, that we may not get time to fear; as when some lightning-stroke may get beforehand with us, or when some earthquake shudder—only one—may topple down our house or city upon us. Or, what is more appalling than either lightning or earthquake, a few drops too many of blood may rush upon our brain, or the heart may burst and send no blood at all. Three-quarters of the life-and-death processes, going on by the hundred in our bodies, are steered, or separated, only by films a little more tender and thinner than gauze. Every thing in us and about us is arranged to keep us in a danger-element and make us somehow alive and apprehensive to evil. And it is not weakness that is appealed to but it is reason—all the rational capacities we possess. If it is in one view an appeal to ignorance, what higher, better, wiser function has reason than the making due account and the keeping due care of ignorance—requiring it, in fact, of ignorance to be apprehensive, just because it can not see?

Reverting at this point to our supposed case of hospitality, we see at once how far off such a supposition may be. It is not as guests that we are being entertained and kept; we are not accepted as in trust at all, not sheltered and castled by our Responsible Host, not expected to be inapprehensive and secure; but on the contrary, it is clearly his fixed design to put us into life as an element of danger, and keep us, doubtless for some moral purpose, in a condition of unrest and more or less painful concern. What that moral purpose may be we need not be greatly at a loss to discover.

1. There is no better way to put us on the care of

ourselves morally, than to make the physical care of our body and life the first lesson of our experience. And this is done most effectively by the crowding of all sorts of perils about us, from our childhood onward. In the moral life there is no government but self-government, no conservation but self-conservation. Things are governed and conserved by their laws; but men, moral agents, are conservable not by moral laws, but only by their own free choice under such laws, in a way of obedience. And the peril here is great—not in respect of the laws, but in respect of the choices. Every thought, inclining, predisposition, all ends desired, motivities played with, parleys and parliaments held in the soul's chambers, make up an element of danger. All the more beautiful is it that God begins, at the earliest possible moment, to put us on keeping due care of ourselves. He sets us down among physical dangers, where our first puttings forth are to be for our safety. The first thing learned by the child is that Nature goes her own way by herself, and does not consider or pity or spare. There is no motherly concern for him, he finds, in the fire, none in the water, none in the hard floor. After a few scorches and physical mishaps, he becomes apprehensive, and takes his body into such care as the danger-lesson has taught him—balancing himself cautiously as he tottles on his feet; standing off from the fire, as if the fire might be coming forth after him; scanning with timorous circumspection the look and approach of the animals, lest perchance they mean some injury. And then as the life lesson begins, so it goes on afterward. Made acquainted with danger by his first experiences, danger goes with him and keeps him faithful company. He stands in some kind of jeopardy every hour. Perils of all sorts and sizes lurk for him in things most common; the pestilence walketh in darkness when he sleeps; in business and travel, fire and water and wind serve him with appalling threats; in his medicine there may be death, in his food ingredients more fatal than gunpowder. And so, brewing always in his danger-element, from childhood onward, he learns to be, in his very habit, a prudent, foreseeing creature; and being thus inducted into the care of himself, as respects the life and life-interests of his body, it is also to be seen whether he will take up, in like faithful caution, a right self-care of his moral and responsible nature.

To see the benefit and profoundly wise purpose of God in such a scheme of experience, we have only to suppose that our life had been set on a footing of perfect, inviolable security; that every power of nature had been cushioned, so to speak, so as never to give a blow; that the fires had been softened by infusions of dew, and the snows by mixtures of wool; that the lightnings had brought their conductors with them, and the thunders sung their explosions on Æolian harps: in a word, that no living man ever scented the possibility of danger, or even conceived what it is. How totally unprepared is he thus for any thing which can be called responsibility. He does not even know what a critical thing is, much less how to take care of himself in a matter as critical as duty, under a peril as momentous as the retributions of immortal wrong. What care has he for any of God's commandments, when no single touch of disaster has ever wakened a feeling of concern for any thing in his bosom? What signifies responsibility, when he knows only self-indulgence and security; when simply to be dandled in the world-mother lap has been the whole matter of his experience? What can he think of caution, or precaution as against any kind of evil, when as yet no pang or sting or blow has ever come nigh enough to startle apprehension? He would go to sea as quietly in a leaky vessel as in a sound one, eat poison as unconcernedly as food, risk a tempest as he would a breeze, and fire as quietly as chloroform. A creature thus trained has plainly no one qualification for the exercise of that really sublime self-care, that belongs to a morally perilous and responsible state. He will have no more concern for his conduct than he has for his breathing, and will let one have its way as unconcernedly as the other. He is never attent to any thing; for it is only a life steering itself through dangers, and educated by them, that gets wakened to the stringently practical, manly state of attention. And what is this habit of attention but a first condition of all right keeping and conduct in the moral, as it is of all sound culture and development in the intellectual, life? But we go a stage deeper into this economy of danger—

2. When we consider the fit relation it has to beings in a state of wrong and disobedience already begun. I

speak here not so much of government, or of what is necessary to its maintenance—the retributive sanctions, or penal enforcements apart from which all law is only advice—but I prefer to set the point suggested directly before those instinctive sentiments of order and fitness that bear sway in the moral judgments of the race. Saying nothing of law thus, or of what is needed to maintain it, we do yet, as by some inborn sentiment of justice, require the state of wrong to be a state of disturbance. We pronounce it a thing unfit and monstrous for peace to be joined to evil, and we forbid the bans. Nothing satisfies us but to have evil-doing linked to evil expectancy and fear. When sin mounts the chariot, we require that danger shall have a seat with it; nay, that, as often as it will, it shall drive. We assume, as by a kind of universal instinct, that wrong of every sort shall have fear and jeopardy for its element; and if we supposed we had gods lurking anywhere, that could have it for their art to give quiet to wrong, we should sooner pluck down their images than pay them worship.

Furthermore, it is a consideration more impressive still, that wrong itself maintains the same opinion—demanding for itself all which it can most bitterly fear, invoking, so to speak, the evils it deserves, challenging unknown terrors, and feeling itself quite unsphered, when it is not in its element of danger. Sometimes bad men or great criminals get hardened, as we speak, and seem to be quite clear of all misgivings; but we only mean by this that they have become apathetic to danger, not that they have discovered the non-existence of it. Even such would deem it a thing most horrible, if they were assured that wrong has no more any thing to fear. And if there were declared to be a God on high, dispensing equally to evil and to good, and as much concerned to shelter one as the other, they would recoil from his worship even as from sacrifice to Ahriman or Siva.

So fixed—so unalterably, universally fixed—are we in the opinion, that a bad world, occupied by souls under evil, must be haunted everywhere by danger, and can not be dissociated from it. There is no misconjunction so absurd as that of safety and wrong, because it is a moral misconjunction, showing our mortal state itself to be out of joint, even down to its lowest foundations; a jargon, a chaos, held by no fixed principles, settled by no terms of order. God's world is a world out of character, all government apart, and as there is no quality of fitness in it, so there is nothing good to come of it. Most vain it will be to look for any kind of moral uses in it; for it could not be more clear that moral ideas themselves have nothing to do with it.

But this appeal to universal judgment in the race cannot, after all, be held as apart from government, or from what is necessary to the fit maintenance of government. We believe in government as universally as in any thing else, and in penal sanctions as the due enforcements of government. And a great part of the abhorrence we feel, as of something monstrous in the state of misconjunction that marries wrong to safety, is due to the implied want of government.. Our feeling is that right is mocked by the loss of its defenses. What worse thing or more dreadful can be said of any civil state or body politic, than that evil-doers are at peace in it, having never any thing to fear. Is this government, we say, that is keeping all crime fearless? which permits the robber to show us our money in his purse, and laugh at us? which guarantees the murderer, when he stalks defiantly by and before the wife and children of his victim? Immunity in crime—what can be more horrible? We require instead that it shall be found either suffering or flying. If the fangs of punishment are not actually fastened upon it, then it must be only that the dogs of justice in pursuit have not yet overtaken it. And so of all government. If God has any government, it will be right for him to make all crime unsafe. That feeling of misconjunction, of which I have been speaking as a universal sentiment, is after all more than a sentiment; the offense we suffer in it is not æsthetical merely, but profoundly practical, requiring penalties to be as strong as sins, and as universally present. It is nothing, in short, but our fixed opinion that God ought to govern his world, and that, if he does, dangers will be frowning in it as many as the wrongs to be redressed. Speculate as we may, we have none of us any practical difficulty, after all, with penalties and penal terrors in God's realm. We should only be revolted if there were none. It would be as if eternal mockery and misconjunction had taken away, not government only, but the distinctions of conduct and character.

3. It is a point still further in advance, that nothing done for the recovery of minds under evil can have any chance of success, which does not weaken their confidence by impressions of insecurity and tokens of danger. It is not enough that, being in evil, fears spring up in prophetic menace from within. To obtain due point and emphasis, that menace wants to be seconded by appalling correspondences of fact without. If the conscience, violated by wrong, utters sentence against itself, there needs to be also a kind of conscience without in things visible—a remorse frowning in the sky, and driving its black tempests across in crashing thunder and hail; throes of wrath shuddering underground and bursting up in flame. The world itself, in short, needs to be a bad conscience physically represented. If there be immutable law for the right, it must, when trampled, be immutable law as an avenger; powers ordained for comfort and blessing must be working disaster; perils must look out from behind objects of beauty; sleep must be scared by shapes of terror flitting across the brain. All the soul's remorseful judgments require to be seconded and set home by the executive preparations of justice. Who will care to be delivered from evil when he sees, in fact, no fiery and bad portent, and no terror of misgiving is felt in his confidence?

But this we shall be told is fear, and what place for fear can there be among the motives to good? Is it true reformation to be afraid? Is it obedience to be driven a-field in duty by the dogs of terror? Do we call it homage to God that we give him up our self-possession, to serve him as in panic or compulsion? It takes but a very little of this cheap sort of argument to raise a considerable show of philosophy for the point of question or denial made; though, if it were a single degree weaker, and more flashy, it would even miss the repute of sophistry. Probably the casuists most forward in it will resolve all virtue by the law of self-interest; and what is fear but a consideration of self-interest. Or they will be such as look for a general and complete expurgation of character in the future life, by long ages of pain there to be endured; and what again is fear but the foreshadow, or fore-sentiment, of pain? and how does pain appear to be a motive at all worthier and nobler than fear? Just this, in fact, is the principal office of pain, or suffering, as one of our terms of discipline, that it prepares to apprehensiveness, so to the avoidance of wrong. Pride might be willing to shake off fear, but it can not shake off pain; and that once entered, opens the sense of danger, never again to be shut. The sense of pain initiates the sense of danger, and so, by a kind of Cæsarean way, the birth of souls into good is made possible. The true conception to be held is simply this: that the argument of fear or danger or felt insecurity is only a preparatory or first-stage argument, never a proximate or properly integral argument for duty. It simply enforces consideration where there is none, and then consideration is to bring on choice and settle it in new dispositions, by other and higher motivities; to bring up truth and love and beauty, and God as their all-containing spring, that they may have their captivating power in their own excellence, and be embraced in everlasting homage for what they are—possible never to be really embraced for any thing else.

And why should there be any so great jealousy of fear as a check to heedlessness and bad living, and as a cautionary motive to the consideration of duty? Is it weak to be alive and thoroughly attent to evils about our path? Who is more distinctively wise than the man who can be cautious enough to foresee dangers, provide a way of safety through them, and maintain, as it were, in this great sea of perils, a firmly balanced prudence? Who, in fact, do we all agree to consider more incurably doltish and thick-headed than the man who can not see any thunderbolt of danger before it strikes him, and then can not see it afterward because it has struck him? What is fear, in this view, but one of the best functions of intelligence? And when we take note of the fact that every human being is organized for the apprehension of danger and pain, the whole skin woven through with nerves of sensibility, to keep it apprised of damage from exposures to fire and frost and violence; the eye made quick to apprehend and shut its gates against every sort of invasion; the very fingers'-ends reticulated with nerves of touch, to make them sensitive to the approaches of pain—when, I say, we note this tempering of the whole body to a mood of precaution, or of quickened sensibility to danger, shall we take it as the Creator's plan to make us weak, organize us into weakness, humble us to a pitiful dejected way of living under the sway of fear? Exactly contrary to this, he is making us quick to fear, that he may put us on our intelligence; train us to a nobler and more capable prudence; lift us into a wisdom more completely sovereign over the bad liabilities that beset us.

And then, if we ask what is the verdict of consciousness in a right life thus initiated or enforced, we shall not find the subject humiliated by the reference he has had to prudential motives, or the beginnings he has made under instigations of peril. The prudentials he began with are now for the most part left behind, and their temporary uses are so far ended, and he is only the more exalted in his consciousness that, beginning at a point of mere self-interest, where and wherewithal it was only possible to begin, he is now rising out of his danger-element into personal majesty above himself—conquering and casting out, and even forgetting, his fear, in that glorious liberty that springs from the supreme love of the good for its own sake. All these lower moods of the mind, therefore—apprehensiveness, fear, danger, concern—have moral uses to serve of the highest consequence and dignity, and the world is wisely ordered to keep them in their proper activity.

4. There are yet two points to be named where the institute of danger fulfills uses more direct or immediate, in training all character up—moral as natural, and natural as moral—to its highest culminations of honor

and respect. I refer to the two attributes of *personal power* and *personal courage* unfolded by it, or by means of it.

About the highest exhibition of power obtained or obtainable by man is discovered in the command or sovereign mind-grapple he learns how to maintain over causes infinitely above him, as respects their physical efficiency. He is not only not cowed before the tremendous forces of the creation of God, but he steals their secret, and by means of it he actually takes them into service. And in doing it he is often moved by the stimulation of danger, going directly into the chambers where the danger lurks, and working in close precinct with it. His most striking contrivances, combinations, tools, machines, operations, discoveries, are ways found out by his intelligence for keeping at bay, or reducing to subserviency, forces that would otherwise crush him. As he must go mining underground, in halls that are filled with combustible, explosive gas, he learns by a little experiment how to fence about his light with a fine wire-gauze, when he has a safety-lamp that commands the gas to be harmless; and walking there underground, through the valley of the shadow of death, with it in hand, he fears no evil. Beset by a dreadful plague, that breathes infection round him year by year, carrying off a third part of the world's children, he learns to steal a poison from one of his domesticated animals, and, vaccinated with a touch of this, he goes, and lets them go, directly into the bad exposure, doing it as securely as if the plague-infection were wholly at his bidding. The wild, half-demoniacal terrors of alchemy attract his search instead of repelling it, and chemistry is the result. The sea is a terrible devouring element, and the mariner goes coasting cautiously along the frightful shores for long ages, fearing not only the rocks and winds, but vastly more that he shall wander into unknown regions, and be never able to find where he is, or by what course to reach his home. By and by it is discovered, by explorative genius groping far away among the stars, that by angle and distance and calculated tables and observations, the random ship that was can find her place, at almost any time, within a mile, and set her course with reliable precision for any country or harbor on the globe. The sea again he finds a yawning gulf between him and the world; he searches it out with his mind as the fishes can not with their fins, maps the still bottom, draws his wire along it, and then sits down to think and talk serenely through three thousand miles of wave and storm. Still more sublime, because vastly more complex, is that wonderful combination of study and experience by which human society learns to organize itself in law and government, so as to keep in safe control those worst infestations of danger that are created by social wrong and passion. The problem is, how to distribute selfishness and set bad power in balance, so as to keep it safe in the maintenance of order and justice. A very cheap, small thing it is to make out navigation tables, even though we go to the stars for our data; but to make out safe navigations for society, and steer the ark of liberty through the perilous seas of wrong and passion—this, alas! is an art that comes more slowly; and yet it comes! We shall have it by and by, the world over. And yet all these and other puttings forth of skill and adaptive discovery, in the nature-field of our life, are only types of that vastly higher and more qualified intelligence by which we are to get the worlds of spirit and religion into our command, and bring the powers of the world to come into our service. In its highest view, the great problem of religion, it is true, is not safety, but righteousness—how to be right with God; how a soul in evil may come up out of evil into God's acceptance and friendship, as being co-ordinate with him in character. And yet the first impulse to this is the felt insecurity of evil, set home and seconded by all the perils of time. From that humble beginning the soul is to get spring, and then, by its divine explorations of study, and faith, and sacrifice, it is to climb up into God's eternity, appropriating all the grandest truths and powers and celestial navigations of his realms. Nowhere does he engineer so loftily and ascend to such a grade of intelligence as here. We have almost no conception of intelligence, what it can contrive, and seize, and command, till we follow it up hither into this diviner field. Think what we may of fear, and danger, and the weakness of all such initiations of motive, they do in fact prepare us to exactly that which is the crown of intelligence, and without which it has no crown.

It only remains to speak now of the courage-principle, rising, as it does, out of the world's perils and dangers, and made sovereign, as to fear, by the ascendency it conquers above them. Great courage—that which makes a hero—is, by general consent, one of the grandest and most eminent distinctions possible to man. Indeed, we are so eager to find heroes, and pay them a voluntary homage, that we sometimes overleap all terms of merit, and take up what are only mock examples. We commonly take our heroes from the fields of war, doing it clearly in the opinion that such kind of greatness may be fitly measured by the dangers encountered. And so far we are right—if only the commander whom we have taken for our hero was a leader, who himself was led by the inspiration of a great and worthy cause. But these are not the only heroes. Just as dangers fill the world, so all men and women too are called to act in some heroic part, and the plan of life itself is to make heroes, according to the nerve and resolute faith by which the fight of life's trial is maintained. The mere infant learning to walk is taking a first lesson of courage, and how much the getting heart for such terrible adventure costs him you will see from the delight he shows in his victory. The boy that dares to be singular is finding how to be about as great a hero as if he were the leader of a battle. The man that makes a great investment, or opens a new trade on the other side of the world, wants great nerve, steadied by a firm confidence of right judgment, such as many wild-brained, accidental leaders in war never knew. All the great inventors, such as Watt, Fulton, Arkwright, and Bessemer, have to fight pitched battles against poverty, conspiracy, and only half success, and finally prevail because they are too great heroes to be mastered. Whether Wellington was more of a hero than the man last named is really doubtful. From certain discoveries in iron, he took the hint of a new possible art that has made him the Tubal Cain of his age. His partial failures, and the consequent loss of confidence he suffered, the beauty of his new combinations, and the stake he made so heroically to retrieve his loss, have made his name one of the grandest names of our time. It is as if he had turned all the railroads of this and all coming ages into steel, and built in steel a network arch of triumph that spans the circles of the world. So in all the engagements of life, the expeditions, adventures, travels, trades, and toils, there is some kind of peril to be mastered, some terrible risk or danger to be met, which none but a most real hero will have mettle enough to attempt; and then as a result he becomes a man as much manlier, as he had more to fear and more to conquer.

And what kind of opinion does God indicate concerning man, when he sets him down here in death's shadow, and hemming him about with every thing to be feared, charges him to get the sovereignty of all, by his wakeful prudence and his steadfast courage. It was here, as it would seem, that Job, considering the storms and perils invading him on every side, fell into so great maze and bewilderment. What kind of creature does my God think me to be, that he hedges me about with so many terrors, and sets me contending with such wild seas? Am I something more than a man, or is it more to be a man than I have thought it to be? "Am I a sea, or a whale, that Thou settest a watch over me? Thou scarest me with dreams. Thou terrifiest me through visions. What is man that Thou shouldst magnify him, and that Thou shouldst set Thine heart upon him, and that Thou shouldst visit him every morning and try him every moment?"

Surely a creature nursed in such wild perils must be designed for some heroic standing and degree. It may not be necessary to suppose that he is either a sea or a whale; enough that he is a man; call him, if you please, a weak, frail creature; the more sublime is it that a creature so frail can find how to master powers so unequal, and assert himself in sovereignty over such dangers. Whoever has seen a storm on the ocean has been made to feel this truth, and probably in a manner that even seemed to be a discovery. The water flies into mist like dust upon a dusty road, filling the air and hiding the foreship from the sight; the ropes groan to the tempest with a deep shuddering sound; wave musters after wave, tossing the huge frame as a plaything or a bubble, driving it up through summits and down through cataracts, sending it over with a lift and down with a shove and a shout—who shall say whither? Ah! man, what now is man? A reed, a straw, a helpless, powerless creature, drifting where God's tempest wills, ready to sink as a fly, into just what gulf will open, there to be no more. But he looks again, notes the commander at his post, watching the symptoms of the storm and the working of the ship. He is a slight-made, very diminished creature, a man; to the smallest of these waves he is nothing. But he has stuck a few chips together, and balanced a bit of wire on its center to guide him, and he is out here on this howling waste, a thousand miles from the land, careering through the waves, and holding on his way, as securely as if they were loaned to his service. And this, indeed, is man—a creature deeper than this sea, and more sovereign, rising out of frailty into grandeur, and creating the sublimity that before was only possible by the conquest of his perils. So God tries him every moment, and so he is magnified. Having nothing to fear, and no rough perils to conquer, how contemptible in comparison the figure to which he would be left.

By this time it must be sufficiently clear that our human world would be an amazingly stupid place, and life itself a wretchedly profitless experience, if there were no dangers in it. We should fall into wrong as it were by dozing; or if we say nothing of wrong, we should do the right idly and without heart, as if it were not fit to be done. We should not be timid, because we have nothing to fear; and as little should we be brave, because we have nothing to conquer. We should never be unfolded in that power and courage which are the real sublimities of character, but we should live in a low, mean key, and die of mediocrity and dullness. Our tempests would be lullabies, our rivers ropy and slow; our lightnings heat lightnings only; and death, throwing by his scythe, would come in gloves with narcotic vials. And then, being what we must, our heaven, if we are to have any, would be a society composed of dull, insignificant people.

VII.

OF THE CONDITION OF SOLIDARITY

As it appears to be a first principle in morality that every man shall be responsible for himself, it would really seem that we ought also to be started every man by himself; that is, separate and sole, a strictly individual nature, common with no other, implicated in no social liabilities that touch the character. And yet we have our very being, as a personality, inwoven with other personalities, and sometimes half consolidated with them. We exist by race, in families, under laws of inheritance, circulating derivative blood, and bearing qualities bred in and in, which as nearly amount to moral character as they well can, without our being answerable for them. And then, again, we are herded afterward, in schools, and guilds, and states, and churches; where we are taken by the common motives, breathe the common atmosphere, and receive a common headship, under the leaders and more forward minds that express because they represent, and represent because they express, the common life. And the result is that we get the stamp of our school, or sect, or general body upon us, so visible, so legibly written, as to be distinguishable even by a stranger. The young

Quaker, for example, dropping off his drab and his grammar, and even his morality, will certainly reveal the type of his connection to any one at all conversant with it.

In so many ways we discover the largely comprehensive, far-reaching fact of our solidarity; a fact which has never been overlooked, but which, for the want of any better term of designation, we are learning of late more and more familiarly to speak of, under this rather dry French name, or epithet. Our theology has long been conversant with ideas closely related under the phrases, "federal headship," "original sin," "covenant of works," "imputed sin," "sinning in Adam," and the like. Some of these are scriptural expressions subjected to a dogmatical construction, and some of them are terms of merely theologic invention; but whatever else may be said, or understood, whether in or out of the Scripture use, they all recognize the one general fact of a solidarity in human life, such as extends, in one way or another, to the liabilities of character. Sometimes the Scriptures speak of "going with a multitude to do evil," as if the multitude were a flood in which all the particular units are drifting; sometimes they speak of judgments descending on "the third and fourth generation" of wicked men, as if the law of a common retribution included all.

Now it is by these conditions of solidarity that we are most often balked in our notions of individuality, and the responsibility of individual men for their conduct. We remember the idolatrous religions of the world, and it does not escape our notice that whole peoples are configured by them to each other, in common ways of falsehood, lust, and cruelty. Suicide or self martyr dom is even held to be an act of pagan saintship. In at least one such pagan tribe, murder is executed under the bonds of religion. And, apart from all religious configurations of character, how often are children trained up in human families to dexterity in crime—sent forth in the morning, for example, to steal, and returning at night to feed on the light-finger revenue of their day—when, if they have not stolen quantities enough, they must be punished for their want of success! Wrong is the very matrix, in a sense, in which thousands of hapless children are formed. There is, in fact, no vice or crime in the world, which is not drunk in often from the element in which human beings live, almost as naturally as a sponge receives the waters of the sea. The dreadful disadvantage thus incurred under the solidarity principle troubles immensely all our notions of morality or responsible obligation. We can not refuse to make some large allowance of charity for such examples, and we are sometimes tempted even to go the length of justification. "Under such enormous disadvantages," we say, "who could be worthier or better? If there is any stone to be cast, let some other do it; we cannot."

Here, then, is our problem, and it must be admitted to be a really dark one. What are the uses or advantages to be gained at so great cost? By what conceivable advantage can disadvantages so immense be morally compensated? In preparing our answer to this question, three preliminaries of great importance are easily settled:—

1. That something closely akin to a condition of solidarity, or common liability, appears to be involved in the existence of moral obligation itself. Such obligation supposes the fact of society, for it is only in social relations that opportunities of right and wrong are created. And then, having such opportunities provided, as moral liberty or freedom of choice is given there is just so far a liberty given to be bad, carry a bad influence, create a poisonous atmosphere, perpetrate frauds and deeds of violence, so to infect or shake the whole frame of society, as also all the members may be doing by a like abuse of liberty; and then society itself being contaminated, will be in turn a contaminating power, of necessity. The whole stress of solidarity in it will now be set for evil. All which could noway be prevented, without either taking us out of society, or never putting us into it; in which case we must have a completely sole existence—which is the same as to say that we shall have no moral sphere at all. As regards the solidarity plan, there was in fact no choice; for, not existing under such a condition, we could have no other field of responsible action. Our right of morality would be just like a marital right and duty in a world where all are men.

2. It is equally plain that we could not exist in a way of reproduction, or in terms of family relationship, without being involved in derivative consequences

and liabilities. Fatherhood and motherhood must carry down effects on childhood, by a law of necessary causation. We encounter, at this point, a grand fact of solidarity, at the foundation or first inception of life. We must either be created outright, every man by himself, full-grown probably and without distinction of sex, or else we must be one race in the constituent liabilities of solidarity—hooked together, in our generations, by a law of derivative life. And so, inherent qualities and tendencies must pass by organic participation. Assuming this fact, which is incontrovertible, we have it then as a question, whether a scheme of existence without childhood, without fatherhood or motherhood, without natural affection of any kind, without any right of training, or counsel, or authority, or any element of family life, sanctified or unsanctified by religion—whether such a scheme of existence would have any moral advantages over the reproductive, family state by which our life is initiated? We judge not unlikely, in our haste, that it would; but there could not be a greater mistake.

We must be created, in that case, in the full maturity of our powers; but we should have no particle of experience to begin with, no judgments formed by experience. Our full-grown passions would be schooled by no habit of self-control. Our will would be green as infancy, and yet in full volume as to power. Our curiosity to know the unknown would inevitably put us on just the bad experiment of Adam, and every one would try it for himself. Meantime we should have entered on a loveless life, which is, so far, worse even than our fall—nobody caring for us, and we for nobody—for we have, in such a case, no ties of natural affection. It would be wonderful, too, if we were not set upon by every sort of robbery and wrong from the comers that arrived before us, only to get our compensation, by like robberies and wrongs upon those who come after, when our turn of hazing arrives. Having no constituent solidarity, our sole state would be the state of Ishmael. We should be obliged to create artificial bonds of defense by conspiracy; and our conspiracies, gotten up without friendship, would be solidarities in selfishness—bonds themselves of oppression—the most unmitigated, devilish type of woe that can well be conceived. The freeness of character in good would be vastly more abridged than now, and the common liabilities of wrong immensely increased. Existing in this manner as solitary magnitudes, our soleness would only bring us into a state of moral oppression hostile to all benefit, and in fact quite unendurable. After all, our solidarity, that brings so many kinds of moral detriment upon us, and of which we so often complain, throwing all the charges of our misdoing upon it, is a far more genial and beneficent condition than any more solitary or separately-begun estate we are able to conceive.

3. It is another very important preliminary, never to be hid or forgotten, when speaking on this subject, that no human being is so far dominated by the moral disadvantages of his bad connection, or the bad example in which he has been trained, as to be wholly un

conscious of wrong, or clear of blame, on account of it. There are two kinds or degrees of wrong; one which violates the everlasting, ideal principle of right, and a second which only violates certain specific rules or maxims of conduct which are conceived to be executory of the principle. No moral being can reject the principle, or consciously be out of the principle, without blame. No condition of solidarity can excuse him from this blame; for the principle of right-doing is in all men, passing through all solidarities, the same in all, whatever be their religions or customs. They would not be men without this great, fixed law of duty in them, even as the animals themselves are not. But it is not so in respect to the particular preceptive rules of conduct which are gotten up to interpret and apply this law. They may vary largely in different nations and ages, being more developed in one, more crude and wild in another; demanding here what is forbidden there, and begetting, under one solidarity, a practice which is abhorrently wrong under another. Here, in this department of specific action, there will be great diversities, and no one is likely to blame himself, when the practice he maintains coincides with the practice of his time, or people, or family. Therefore we are to make, in this field of preceptive rule and practice, a very large allowance for what to us is very false and low; never judging others, differently associated and trained, as we would judge ourselves. They may even be justified in that which to us would bring the bitterest self-condemnation. We only know that they never are justified in doing or meaning any thing wrong, as related to eternal principle. Thus it may be that the Spartan children, trained to theft by public law itself, had never a feeling of compunction in their lives concerning that practice; and yet, being consciously out of principle, and wrong in the grand moral aim of their life, they would carry along so much, at least, of condemnation in all their conduct, and would have no more claim to be justified by us, than they have reason to justify themselves.

We teach ourselves, in this manner, to give full scope to the solidarities of feeling and practice in which men are trained; condemning them never, save as they violate their convictions, but perfectly assured of this, that they never do, in fact, quite justify themselves; because they go into all their conduct with a sentence of self-condemnation upon them, for the conscious alienation of their life from what should be its reigning principle. And so much is there in this, that we should be much nearer the truth if we judged them to be guilty, in all their deviations from our own standards of practice, than we should in a clean acquittal of all wrong because they have not been trained in our standards; for there is one standard everlasting, which, as being simply men, they have revealed in their hearts, and by which they are consciously condemned. The question of wrong or sin is never ended, as a certain class of writers in our time very flippantly assume, when they find one people or tribe maintaining a standard exactly contrary to the standard of another; for there is a higher, all-inclusive, absolute standard, and it may be that none of us are justified by that. In this standard all our judgments touch bottom, and by this every thing is to be squared; and if we have precepts less inclusive and more superficial, it is better to make of them only what is to to be made.

Having settled these preliminaries, we come out in the conviction that our debate is not ended, and that, after all due allowance made for the solidarities of our existence, there is yet abundant room for the belief that they belong to the best-appointed moral condition possible, and have moral uses in which our advantage is deeply concerned. What these uses are we are now to inquire.

1. It will of course be conceded that, where there is a solidarity or common life in good, that good will have a more complete and more easily controlling sway. The hard thing we complain of is, that evil gets a power so nearly absolute in this manner. Of course it will be admitted that good obtains a similar advantage. The state of solidarity works either way, and the design appears to be to bring it more and more completely on the side of good; for a progress in truth and character and all forms of good appears to be expected: so that, finally, grand consolidations and massings of society will be gathering heavier momentum and a more and more beneficent sway over the conduct and life of individuals. Good men will then be born by nations--a nation in a day.

The beneficent powers thus garnered up in the solidarity principle, we have never yet seen; and we take up very hastily the impression that it is a kind of organic law of advantage given only to wrong and evil. But suppose we take, for example, that fearfully depressing and disabling power, which is exerted against individual industry and character by a bad or oppressive government. It is a public despotism, massing the might of a nation against private worth and success. Let now such private worth and success, consolidated in some people by intelligence and religion, so far get the start of despotism, here or there, as to organize for itself institutions that give full hope and liberty and scope to every man and child—what will now be seen more certainly than that every sort of despotism in the world will be yielding itself slowly to the new example; growing beneficent, fostering intelligence, liberating the press and religion; so that finally, private worth and character, instead of being suppressed, will be called forth and created in all the old, exhausted nations by the governments that seemed before to be their inevitable hinderance? Here, then, we have one people, constructing, at last, a grand solidarity of righteousness in government, more or less nearly universal. And so this one people gets a hold, through the solidarities of civil order all over the world, whereby it changes and raises up into character and new-sprung life all other peoples all over the world; making even the kings to be their nursing fathers and the queens their nursing mothers, in all noblest principle and most vigorous intelligence. And then, when it has come to this, how very difficult will it be for any government ever to become bad or oppressive again; for every throne or state is looked upon by every other, and can not willingly lose its respect!

Take another example of a different type. We speak, and so does the Scripture, of a lapsed condition that is brought on the race by inheritance; for, as certain as evil is upon any former generation, some damage must accrue, on physiological principles, to every subsequent generation. Without being made responsible, then, for what we have not done ourselves, we are involved in the common damage of a common liability, and go down as a race in the strict solidarity of our connection. We might also go down, every man for himself, in a state of sole existence—we probably should—but the disorder we suffer by inheritance puts us in a state of common disadvantage, where evil gets the ascendency prior even to our consent. We sometimes complain of this, and imagine that no fair chance at all is given us. But suppose this same law of physiological connection to be finally rectified and purified in the progress of time, all Christian parentages becoming the spring thus of a graciously rectified and purified germinal life in their children—and it must as certainly be so as that there is any transmission of quality at all—and then these two results will follow: First, that the new solidarity in good, thus consummated, will be at once more prosperous and more healthy, being clear of the poisons of vice and of all habits of excess, and will thus overpopulate and virtually live down the more corrupted families: Secondly, that every such family will become a rectified stock, transmitting seeds of uprightness that will propagate much as they themselves are propagated, even to the end of the world. In these two modes, the great solidarity principle, which we think of only as our disadvantage and the spring of our moral disaster, is to become itself the propagator finally of righteous life for the whole race. We now think, and are wont often to say, that being down, as a race, under evil, there is not much really to come of our truly forlorn world, but loss and a vastly preponderant undoing; but we do not consider that our experiment is barely begun; that we are yet to go on—as all our vast incipiencies and the foregone geologic eras prophesy—existing so long, in populations so vastly increased, and raised so high in quality, that the ages, looking back, will see us to be very nearly contemporary with Adam, and will think of the race as a grand providential success, fruitful only in good and triumphant only in blessing!

2. Where a bad power gets advantage and a more dominating sway by massing itself in family connections, and guilds, and castes, and whole nationalities, it is almost certain to finally weaken itself by the very solidarities that in the beginning gave it strength. It acts, at first, with a fearfully propelling power; and then it begins to react, letting itself down, as it were, by exhaustion. Aristocracies flourish in this manner, obtaining, for a time, greater and still greater eminence, as the splendors and pomps they display are raised in

the scale of magnificence; captivating, as by a spell of admiration, vast multitudes of retainers; but the pride and gilded virulence of their contemptuous habit begins at length to make them felt as an oppression they sink in dignity as their frequent profligacy compels; the admirations they raised fall away and are sickened by impatience, till at last the tremendous reaction of their pompous lie breaks it utterly down, and the sublime truths of universal manhood and brotherhood are erected into higher sway and a more beneficent solidarity. Fashion goes through a similar course; nothing is so captivating and all-compelling as a rising fashion, and nothing so weak and wind-broken as a mode that begins to have the symptoms of wane. And the more nearly any fashion approaches to licentiousness of manners and conduct, the more sure is the reaction to be hastened, and the fools most ambitious to be forward in it, to slink away humbled and mortified by it. The power of domination wielded by a corrupt party will seem for a long time to grow by the appetite that feeds it, and what is called the discipline of the party will very nearly submerge all liberties of character and opinion in the individual members. But whether it be seen or not, such kind of growth is only organizing a monster, and that monster, like another of old time, will by and by devour his own children. His bad power will culminate, in other words, in such disorders, and distractions, and oppressions, within itself, as will rend its own combinations, and hurl it off the stage as an outlaw no more to be endured. The grandest, most appalling solidarity the world has ever seen is the Church of Rome; but it has passed the crisis of its majesty, and is sloping downward into a state of dejection that is fast growing pitiful. And when it breaks, as break it must, what a lesson for good will it have given by its amazing assumptions and the dismal inanities of superstition it has finally worn out in the world! We spoke just now of another kind of solidarity in the organic propagations of the race. It propagates in one view, as we saw, evil itself, even as it propagates the existences that are its subjects. In that view, it seems to be only a law of moral disadvantage inserted into the human populations. But this bad solidarity, though it may never be wholly extirpated by its reactions, is yet working powerfully always by reaction. We speak of it and think of it as our bond of death, the common desolator of our good possibilities and hopes, that which baffles our best personal endeavors and mocks all the dearest prospects of human society. The important thing to be noted is, that our common state of evil—evil as in terms of blood and kindred—creates in this manner a salutary and very intense prejudice against it. Seeing its foul touch everywhere, and consciously struggling with its dreadful bondage within, we picture it as a destroyer with a grudge of animosity; we virtually detest its bad dominion, whether it is cast out in us or not. If we knew the state of evil only as our own bad choice, apart from all bad kinship and contamination of blood, we might even try to hold a good opinion of it; we certainly should not help ourselves into a bad opinion of it, as now, by the instigation of our flagrant fellow-sympathy against it. On the whole, it will be found that all bad solidarities, while doing much to the moral disadvantage of the race, are yet under a doom of reaction, by which they will finally assist the complete reign of truth and righteousness.

3. The condition of solidarity compels even those who are dominated by it to see what hideous evils and wrongs are in it, by the woes they bring on society and the persons closest to them in their human relationships, when its bad instigations are upon them. Take the example, near at hand, of our own late rebellion. Considering the numbers implicated, and the atrocity of the purpose attempted, there was never before so great a crime. We had a government that was the noblest fabric of liberty and public reason ever constructed, looked upon with new-born hope by the weary, time-worn civilizations all over the world. It was cloven down by revolt, and a conspiracy vast enough to make an empire by itself proclaimed its end. War only could restore it, and it must be war upon a most gigantic scale. By its armed millions trailing over broad spaces of territory, occupied by millions before resting in peace; by its hundreds of battles, great and small, strewing these spaces with dead; by cities, and even whole states swept clean, as by a tempest of fire; by families, in almost every neighborhood, mourning the loss of their manliest fathers, and sons of noblest promise; by four long years of terror and distraction that kept even

the air tremulous with apprehension—at so great cost the victory of right is won. And yet the solidarity in wrong was a body too vast to be cooled in a day. But few, alas! of all the agitators and forward leaders of the rebellion—none of all the people concerned in it but the poor victims who were forced into it against their loyalty—appear to have become truly sensible, as yet, of the enormity of the crime. They still smoke and smolder in the pride of their defeat, defiant, for the most part, of control, relieving their impotence by the violent epithets they heap on the friends of order, and claiming even the right, as before all rights were forfeited, to make their own terms of pacification! All which we duly understand when we speak the word *slavery*—it is the solidarity of wrong in human slavery; that which overawed dissent, and hunted the friends of order into the ranks to die; that which, having organized a vast savage empire, in the domineering instincts of absolutism, cannot be suddenly tempered to order and reason. But there is just now a token of relenting here and there, and the time is not far off when all this rage shall utterly die. The bond of wrath is broken, slavery is gone, the slave country for the present is a ruin, the sublime masterhood is poor, and the immense burdens it has hung as an incubus on the productive industry of many generations, it must now itself assist to bear. Is any one ignorant as to what must be the issue? It can be none but this: that they are going, as reflection gets more opportunity, to look on these terrible woes of rebellion as witnesses against the stupendous solidarity of sin, in their slaveholding manners and society. The walls they see here and there grimed with smoke and scarred with shot; the breastworks and redoubts overgrown with bushes; the sad stories repeated, and faces looked upon of orphans now grown up, and widows gray with age, whose loyal protectors they tore away and sent off to their armies, never to return; yes, and the faces they meet of contemporaries whom they knew standing fast by their country in the wild, mad hour, suffering scorn and confiscation for its sake—all these tokens are going to be witnesses, more piercing as life advances; and the whole bad history of the time is going, before they die, and for all generations to come, to be a standing revelation of the terrible virulence of this institution, this overgrown solidarity of wrong, such as no testimonies or confessions of individual men could produce. And what is to be specially noted further is that the Union masters, those who were so totally overborne by the current, and suffered such bitter cost for their fidelity, will themselves have gotten from the wild, mad violence that took away their liberty, a feeling of responsibility for the common sin of slavery, such as they could never have felt, under any most pungent appeals of private conviction. Here, then, is a vast solidarity in wrong, probably unmatched before in the history of the world, and it is going to result in a felt conviction of the wrong, that is not exceptional, but common to all. Indeed, when there was a fast proclaimed by the Confederacy in revolt, it is not difficult to believe that the solitary men of Union went deeper into it, and felt more humbled by their ill desert in the common sin of the time, than any of their neighbors most forward in the rebellion.

Take a different kind of example. A once profligate and vicious father has a child spotted with incapacity in his organization—idiot, or deformed, or subject to pain, and perhaps distorted by it. Under the laws of blood and kindred that child is his, and "this," he is obliged to say, "is my stamp put upon it." He may be a man practically restored to ways of virtue; and, if so, it will only cost him conflicts the more dreadful, that he is obliged to look thus on the face of his sin, still and always before him, in a shape so appalling. Meantime, if his child has sense enough to know why he is so badly misshapen, or whence he draws his morbid, misbegotten temperament, it will yet never occur to him that he is no subject of accountability, because the poison of his fatherhood is in him. Or we may take a case where the law of the house, after birth, becomes the poison. A robber who murdered his victim is brought forth to the scaffold, where he is to suffer the extreme penalty of the law. And there is a poor, lorn creature there, who is called and calls herself his mother. She never inculcated in her son a single right principle. She taught him to steal, sent him forth to it every morning, flogged him at night when he returned without booty, and so, as we should say, made him exactly what he is,—we might even think of her as being herself the criminal, which in some true sense she certainly is. And if she has any capability of compunction left, it will now, if ever, be seen, and will be as pungently moved as it can be. And yet we shall see that the son, brought up in such an atmosphere of crime, whipped into crime, learning how to live only by the fruit of crime, will distinctly show, and frankly confess, that he is rightly made responsible for his actions. How far short, indeed, any such bad solidarity may be from submerging individual responsibility, we are sometimes given to see, when a son or a daughter grows up as a flower of virtue, in the filthiest, most poisonous atmosphere, more fixedly abhorring every sort of baseness, for the proximity to it in which the early childhood was passed.

Once more, it is only by the resolute, upheaving power of individuals against the crushing weight of bad or opposing solidarities that a really massive and overmastering virtue is prepared. A great character supposes great victories, won by invincible courage. It is not, of course, to be supposed that God has raised up these frowning solidarities about us, and arrayed them against us, merely for our good. As far as they are in wrong, they create themselves, and then it is given us, every one, to have his advantage in the power we get by confronting them. And so the great leaders, agitators, and champions of civil liberty, bursting their way through the bonds of despotism; the reformers of wrong and vicious custom; the restorers of holy truth, long disfigured by the dogmas of false science; the heroic believers, who, for Christ's sake, have been cast out in their youth by the fierce, ungodly will of their fathers;

the martyrs who have carried their bodies into the fire to bear witness against persecutors in power—all such we look upon as the true men, because they pay so great a price for their birthright. The solidarities they found against them; but they had their principle, and in that, single handed, they were the majority. The respectabilities stood mountain high in their path, but they had the courage to pass over. They had soul enough in the right to confront multitudes, and dignities, and sanctities, and all kinds of powers and times. Having something true to be thought, they could think it; something right to be done, they could do it. They could be unpopular; and when they had great principles to wrestle for, they expected to be. In this manner, being never atall willful, they yet came to have a tremendous will—meek, gentle, immovable; able to look quietly down over numbers and names, and all dictations of bad solidarity, moving, as it were, in calculable force and certainty against them. And this it is that makes the sublimity of a character morally great. How it can ever become massive and solid enough, when it has no such heavy bulk of resistance to move, we are scarcely able to imagine.

Thus if a time should finally come, as we have shown reason to expect, when the solidarities will themselves be converted to the other side, beginning to work through all the laws of inheritance and society, for the propagation of good, as they have done for the propagation of evil, then, as duty will have so much less to resist and overcome, it must take on a character having as much less vigor. It will be fashioned more by yielding, and less by the overcoming of resistance, and wil. have a smooth, gentle, innocent way, forming a character more like that of children translated early, and having only to bloom in the soft airs of Paradise, never to fight. Such kind of character will have a true beauty, but there will be nothing grandly heroic in it. The heroes of the world came earlier, and we may well count it one of our particular privileges and honors to live in these heroic ages, when virtue gets due bulk and brawn by its victories.

On the whole, I think it will be seen, as the result and proper conclusion of this discussion, how very little weight and significance there is in the assumption, so pompously and frequently thrust upon us, that wrong is but a word, and no real matter for which we are answerable. The doctrine propounded in high airs of philosophy is, that we are all going on by development, and that the virtues and crimes, the saints and felons, are all, in fact, equally good; products all of circumstance, inheritance, and social instigation. If such teachings were less shallow, they would be atrocious. Weak souls, emulous of strength, often hope to conquer the repute of it by audacity—a very cheap form of vigor to which they ought certainly to be equal. Nobody, in fact, believes, speculate as he may, that circumstance or society does every thing in us, and we nothing. Good and evil are, in our idea, the most absolute opposites; and there is no bridge, or place, or space for a bridge between them, more than between a straight line and a crooked. When we do wrong, no matter under what inducement, it is not because we are fools that remorse takes hold of us, but because we are men. When we suffer wrong we spurn the philosopher at hand, who will save us from the feeling of blame by what he can tell us of development—that is, of society, circumstance, family origin, family training; we think there was something also in the bad will of the wrong-doer, and we hold him responsible to justice. We do not abjure punishments, because we believe in society; we have a place for punishments, just because society exists, wanting their defense; for we see that single souls have power to face all society, and seize upon it as their prey. Who, meantime, are more unsparing and fierce in their denunciations than our philanthropizing philosophers, when they undertake to be reformers? Is there nothing blamable in what they so bitterly denounce? Doubtless, all due allowances are to be made in our moral condemnations, for the bad solidarities in which wrong-doers have been trained—not for those only which have put their stamp of ignominy on the weak and the low, but as readily for those which are inbred in men of condition. Slaveholding for example—who has been swayed and fashioned by a power more absolute than the solidarities of slavery; bred as a tyrant, trained up to a domineering habit, even in childhood; wonted in cruelty; stimulated in passion; fed on the spoils of right? There was never a form of society more imperiously toned, as respects the liberties of duty and the possibilities of character. All men are to have their allowance, and yet as certainly to have, in wrong, their condemnation. Nor let any one think it hard that he himself is required to stem so many opposing tides and storms, in maintaining the struggles of duty; rather let him take it bravely as his opportunity.

VIII.

OF NON-INTERCOURSE BETWEEN WORLDS.

The creation of God is one, having all its parts in such relation that they make up a whole which excludes the possible notion of plurality. This oneness also is the type in matter, of a complete, universal society preparing in its populations. As God has but one creation so he has but one society, and he is doing every thing to compact and perfect that society; drawing it to everlasting accord, in one kind of morality, under one set of principles, resulting in one kind of character, and a common beatitude with himself. And yet there seem to be fences of separation here and there, that, in working such a state of complete unity, would not be expected. As far as we know, there is no intercourse allowed, or made possible, between the populations of the stars, but they go their rounds of revolution, as completely separated as if they were always to be as many societies, separated by as many gulfs of incommunicable distance. Sometimes we are not altogether patient of this non-intercourse. We want to know these populations; and it is not mere curiosity, but the sense of a fellow-nature and feeling, that puts us reaching after them. Who are these brethren of the stars? In what fortunes do they have their lot? What stature and figure have they? What kind of history do they make? Have they stood clear of evil, or are they down under it, and struggling up through it and out of it, in much weariness and sorrow, even as we are? Our heart, which has no sense of distances, yearns after them and beckons them; yet there they hang, as far away as if we cared not for them—and there is no bridge!

This walling apart we discover also in other matters closer at hand, where we should not look for it; as if it were designed to separate, or hold apart, large families and nations of people that belong to the general brotherhood of the race. Vast wilds and almost continental forests, great deserts, and immense oceans of water, separate and hold apart how many of the chief populations of the world. And yet, perhaps, we can distinguish reasons of beneficence here, that will, in part, explain the separations we discover elsewhere; showing how they do, in fact, conduce to the growth, and right, final development of the one, complete society. These wild forests and deserts and oceans are, in one view, circumvallations of so many peoples, living apart thus in their fortresses. Were their habitable parts swung up side by side with each other, and separated only by imaginary lines, they would all be marching everywhere, and safe against the chances of defeat, or sudden irruption, nowhere. In a bad world populations are hostile, and fences and defenses are wanted to keep them safe. They are better prepared for society, that, for the present, they are kept apart

In the particular instance also of the sea, setting nations apart by spaces of water that are in fact highways of commerce and beneficent community in trade, may we not see typified and illustrated the general fact, that all separations of peoples and worlds are separations for society and not against it? Had the populations of the stars free travel and swift, passing at will and telegraphically through all distances, the very sky might have been scarcely better than a battle-ground, and the zodiac itself kept red by the fights of armies. If these populations are all in evil, the spaces between them, whether grateful to our human curiosity or not, are probably not wider than they should be.

By these suggestions, which are confessedly suggestions of ignorance to a great extent, I hope to get some little advantage, in the introduction of a particular subject that is more pressing; namely, the condition of absolute non-intercourse, that appears to be ordained between departed souls and their friends whom they have left behind. We very frequently express our wonder at this, and sometimes we complain of it. Could these departed come back and make report, how much would they tell us that we need above all to know! How easily, too, could it be done; and who would be disadvantaged, or damaged by it? And what short work would be made of all our most troublesome doubts concerning immortality and God, and God's great future! Now, we should know, we think, and no more only guess, or believe. What appetite also would our returning brothers give us for the celestial things; telling what they have seen of them, what kind of greetings met them when they arrived, and what ravishments took hold of them, in the wonderful scenes and societies into which they entered. We do not speak with any such desire of the return of our bad friends or acquaintances, and testify no such regret that they are not allowed to come and report their story; though perhaps we might look for as good profit in that. Perhaps we recoil from that unpleasant kind of intercourse, making tacitly a selection that will bring us none but the righteous and well conditioned. Perhaps we forget for the time, that the departed are possibly not all in such condition, as regards felicity, that we can receive them and hear the report of their experience with pleasure.

Let me not be understood, however, to assume that the departed of this world never do, in fact, return. Two or three such cases of righteous men returning to the world, besides the case of Lazarus and others raised from the dead, are reported in the Scriptures. If, as many suppose, the bad spirits concerned in the demoniacal possessions are the spirits of bad men, working still in craft and malignity, and doing still their mischiefs, then it would seem that these are, at least so far, to be taken as cases of return; only they do not come in the bodily form, to be personally known and spoken with. Many persons in our day believe that by a certain art of necromancy, in what are called mediums, or magnetic clairvoyants, the dead are recalled very much at will, making responses to questions that are put to them, and giving their advice in real oracles. I know nothing of this, save that such as were very intelligent, cultivated men when alive, give very unintelligent and crude answers now, and also that, when their oracles prove false, it is given as excuse, that bad or dishonest spirits coming back will of course deceive, and are therefore to be trusted with caution. Swedenborg thought he had commerce with spirits—good spirits, of course—and had a theory about our relations to the spirit-world that took away all sorts of distance, but distance of character. Doubtless it has occurred to almost every thoughtful person, that our affinities put us in immediate company, possibly, with all like affinities good or bad, and that so we get helps in good, or demonizing powers in evil, from the invisible access to us of departed spirits. I shall recur to this matter in a way more positive hereafter, and therefore dismiss it for the present.

Still it is practically true that our departed do not come back in such visible, external way as we appear to mean when we speak of it, and that they are so far kept in a relation of practical non-intercourse. This is the loss, if it be a loss, that we deplore in our complaint. And the fact Christ himself appears to recognize, denying most expressly that we suffer any loss on account of it. Thus, when the rich man of his parable makes request that a messenger may be sent back to warn his brothers, the reply is, for substance, It will do no good, they will not believe the messenger—"If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." I believe there is a general feeling that Christ exaggerates a little in this answer of Lazarus; that we should, nevertheless, be really persuaded, and that Christ only means to put in the best defense he can for the existing fact of non-intercourse, as he finds it in our actual experience—arguing rather from the fact than toward it. Indeed, it seems to us all a thing perfectly obvious, that the question of immortality could be settled easily, by just letting witnesses come back and tell their story; so easily, that it sometimes wakens a feeling of suspicion lest there may be something hollow in the faith of immortality; else why should an evidence, so much wanted and so reasonably demanded, be withheld? These friends of ours and of God would certainly come back if they were still alive, even though it might cost them much revulsion of feeling to mix again, so far, with scenes of guiltiness and characters uncongenial. Costing them much sacrifice, they would do it the more gladly for that reason. Why, then, is this gate of eternity so fast barred? Why are these dead so dumb—showing no token or sign? Has that nothingness we dread overtaken them? Most of us think otherwise, and yet how often are we made to think just this.

Now, the first thing, as we open this question for study, is to form a more full and exact conception of what is implied in the kind of intercourse we ask. We are in no condition to judge rightly, if we do not follow out the subject far enough and carefully enough, to see the very uncomfortable things which may possibly belong to such a mode of intercourse, or which are, in fact, included in it. The supposition is, that the departed are to come back in body and voice, to communicate with us through sight and hearing. It is not their silent ghost we ask; for then what evidence could we have, that any thing better than a strange illusion has befallen us? When they come, it must also be, either because they are sent by selection, or because they are particularly sought by us, or because they are free to come and go at their own will. Probably enough all three suppositions will concur. The latter, not including the others, appears to be the general thought which occupies our demand; for it is not a few sporadic cases of return that we ask—so few and far apart that all evidence brought us will be rumor and hearsay—but we want them to come freely, and come to us and to everybody that wants light, so that we may have witnesses always at hand. In this manner, they are to be somewhat common among us—not sufficiently common to be included as fixed residents in our society; but so far common as to create no special surprise. And it does not appear to be often considered that our required evidence will be incomplete unless the bad souls also come back; for they have had an experience as truly as the good, and it is an experience which it greatly concerns us possibly to know. The good, not being in that experience, will know nothing specially concerning it; and their story, being wholly beatific in its color, will put us in a feeling that every thing is beatific there, unless some adequate representa tion of the bad experience is also given. But if these bad souls are to come back, they may come as deceivers possibly, and not as faithful witnesses, and it will be impossible for us to guess whether their report is true or false. What their behavior, too, will be, is a question that looks ominous and difficult. Who shall answer for them that they will keep the peace? What conspiracies may they not concoct? What revolutions and tumults may they not stir up? In times of public war, what advantage will they have in the spy service? In the intrigues of diplomacy, they may easily become the chief intriguers. When they meet the good spirits returned, as they sometimes will, being all in body and so made visible, it is not quite certain that they will not sometimes be moved with so hot a feeling of hostility as to attack them with violence. And what forbids the supposition that we, grown familiar thus with the other world's people, as we certainly should be in a little while, may not sometimes be so badly annoyed by the interruptions and the unwelcome advice of the departed good, and so easily exasperated against them by the hostile instigations of the bad, as to set ourselves upon them in a real persecution—even as we persecuted Christ, who himself came down from heaven, and proved himself by his miracles, as no departed brother of our race ever could or can.

But suppose we consent to take up with a half representation of the other world, and let the bad departed remain wholly shut away, a great many other perplexities will be involved, such as more than counterbalance the chances of benefit. A certain man, of reputed worth and piety, died yesterday, and we ask the departed brother, who returns this morning, and who knows him well, if he has seen him? He replies, with a sad look, that he has; that he has come out badly on the other side, where it is discovered that he gained his late case at law, against the estate of a poor widow and her children, by perjury. The dispossession required by the verdict is to be executed to-morrow, and what shall be done? Will the court execute an order against the discovery thus made? Can the case be reopened? Probably not, for no such thing is known to the law, as hitherto administered. But if such discoveries were really coming out every day, the law would be different. Every court must have its right to revise, and even to revise the public records, when such new evidences come back in the report of God's messengers. So if we ask whether the court, in the case supposed, will cite the departed man to appear and testify; perhaps it will not; but if such reappearances of the departed were grown common, common law would require it. And if the departed citizen who is cited to appear and testify, should refuse, in a case where both mercy and justice so plainly require it, he would even be accessory to wrong. In this way, as the departed are to be largely mixed with the living, so they must be mixed with all the proceedings of law, civil and criminal. And what the result will be, in such a mixture of worlds, it is not easy to guess. It is very cer tain that no man will be hung for a crime, when twenty messengers from the other world come testifying that he is innocent; as certain that no public record can stand, when as many messengers from the unseen world testify that it is a forgery, and that the forger was discovered there a hundred years ago and put to his reward. All public records, in fact, will have to be corrected by the records of eternity.

Meantime, what a state of confusion will come down upon all the schools and teachers and books of theology, when departed men come back to report the facts, discoveries, and principles accepted in the better world. All the authoritative doctrines, elaborated with so great care and study, will have to be revised—some to be modified, some to be corrected, some to be expurgated, some to be abated and denounced. The new witnesses will not be fanatics or revolutionists; but there is a way of wisdom, in their tranquil utterance, all the more impressive, that they tell how largely they have been themselves corrected, and how they have learned to put every thing in a color so different. Probably some of the doctors will be wholly unable to believe their testimony, or will insist on their being impostors, and not the departed whose names they have taken. Neither can we forget how very soon the feeling of awe must be taken off by such conditions of familiarity, and how liable the two kinds of teachers—one from this world and the other from above—might be to fall into a public wrangle for their opinions. Probably not even Luther, coming back as rectified, would be orthodox. The teachers returned will of course be more capable; but the teachers we have of our own will be enough more positive and logical, to hold a considerable chance of preponderance.

Every department, in short, of life and every sort of transaction will be somehow changed and put in disorder. Sometimes the departed, nowise diminished in their affections and the sense of what is due to family engagements, might intrude on new connections formed, in very unwelcome and appalling visits. Sometimes a godly saint might be recalled and found present, as the only true mourner, weeping over the heartlessness and hollow parade of his own funeral.

Now, it will be objected, I presume, by some, that I am able to raise this look of maladjustment only by supposing an over-physical or literal return of the departed. What, then, is really meant, we again ask, by those who so often complain or testify their wonder that no state of intercourse with the dead is permitted? Do they simply want a flitting, cursitating, ghostly appearance, such as we name by the word apparition? some phantasm which is here and there and nowhere; which vanishes as soon as it is seen, and can not be found, and which nobody can be quite certain that he has seen at all? How many such uncertified, practically unbelieved appearings do we hear of every day. No, they want something to make evidence—not some apparition that requires more evidence—a man from the dead solid enough to certify himself, real enough to be distinguished by his voice, and staying long enough to be no figure of the fancy. They also want such visitations to be more or less common, that all may have the profit, and the strangeness of them may not shock or discourage the faith they are expected to help. And then, how far off are we from the very same over-real and literal conception I have been drawing out? The forbidding pictures and conjunctions I have sketched are clearly seen to be no extravaganza gotten up by overdrawing the matter in question. Exactly such reappearances are, in fact, wanted, and to be just as nearly common as I have represented. We may not so understand it, but this is the exact purport of our desire—this and nothing else.

It begins, in this manner, to be evident that the condition of non-intercourse between the departed world and the living, so much regretted by many, is not as undesirable as they assume it to be. If the fences that part the two worlds were taken down, and a state of free intercourse permitted, about every thing in the present order of life and society would be subverted. This, if only the good were allowed to return; and all the more certainly, if the bad also were coming abroad, to be at large among us. I think, too, that we shall be the better satisfied with our present state of non-intercourse, if, as I now propose, we set ourselves to a deliberate consideration of the moral uses and benefits resulting from it.

And here it will be seen, at a glance, that our state of non-intercourse, so-called, makes a full period, at the closing point of life, giving it a look of finality that is both impressive and salutary. If we thought our dying friends would be coming back to us to-morrow, to speak more impressively than to-day, because they will know more and testify from a point more advanced, we should not catch their last words to be concluded by them, for they are really not last—other and better we expect to follow. So if we were coming back ourselves, to make up our deficiencies of duty to our friends, how easily and securely should we postpone all our most important, most responsible obligations. But when we remember as now, that "the night cometh, when no man can work," the charge that our Master connects with that most cogent argument—"work while it is day"—practically means "to-day," allowing no postponement of the duties of to-day.

It would also be a very great moral damage to us to have the grand realities of religion made as familiar as they would be if departed souls were allowed to be returning frequently, in visible form, to mingle with us. Such familiarity would breed contempt, just where a little more distance and withdrawment would give power. There is a foolish and presumptuous side in our human nature that makes too great familiarity dangerous. Not even Jehovah would be God to his people, if he allowed them to see more than just the back of his retiring form. For this reason, doubtless, it is that the gate of the other world opens only that way, and never backward. The sanctity of that dread world is both more dread and more inviting, because it is kept unknown, or practically unreported to us.

We are kept in this manner also from that kind of dissipation which is so easily begotten by an obtrusive and shallow curiosity. In this kind of curiosity, we forget both our errand and our measure. Could we question thus departed souls as often as we please, and of such historic figure as we please to select, there would be no end to our questions, and no beginning to our moral benefit. We should be like those people who are going so often to the seers and sittings of necromancy, exulting much in the fine proofs they get of their immortality by so many witnesses, yet believing only just as much less as they are more astounded by the revelations—religiously addled, and counting it the same thing as religion. If we could have departed souls returning thus at call or without, to be familiarly questioned, the simple curiosity gendered would be enough of itself to frustrate all the most sober purposes of life. In a spirit so frivolous, or a mood so light-headed, the motives of duty get no power. It is as if the soul were amusing itself in experiments on the unknown leap and what comes after, and so much delighted with the revelation obtained, as to look no more for profit, than it would in the breathing of a gas. Nothing is worse than to get the matters of duty and religion into the sphere of gossip. All the worse, if the dread gates of eternity are opened thus, chiefly for the sake of gossip, and the righteous dead let forth to be the chief gossipers; telling stories for the curious, indulging them in talk and free report, and making up a gospel which is only gossip, nothing more.

It would also give us an immense opportunity for ambition if this free intercourse with the departed were allowed us. If it were given us to make our own selection, we might never call for any but some very distinguished personage. We might desire, not so much the saints as the high saints, such as made a name by their figure in this life. Intercourse with God's little ones might not please our vanity, and the result would be that the great and celebrated personages would be hurried and worried, and set trooping day and night, to answer the calls of all most beggarly, insignificant people, while the little ones who pack God's family—really the great to him, and for us the most competent teachers, because most truly on the level of our experience—would not be summoned once in a thousand years. And if they should come to us of their own accord—supposing all to come in this manner and not by our selection—I fear that some of us might be mortified, and that sometimes the uncelebrated souls would encounter incivility enough from us to send them back to their places. While if one of us should have a spontaneous visit from some great personage—Washington, Luther, Paul, Moses, for example—it would inflate our ambition, I fear, to such a pitch as to quite overset the balance of our dignity. In our present temper, neither class of souls, the great or lowly, could hope to bring us any spiritual gift.

Again, it is a very great argument, as respects the subject in question, that we get all the best, most valid, most effective conceptions of things from the things themselves, and not from what rumor or tradition reveals, or from what talkers can tell us. We learn about nature, for example, by going directly to nature herself, putting our ear to her voices, observing her changes with our eyes. We do not look for genii to come forth out of nature and show us how she began and by what laws she works; we do not implicitly trust even travelers, when they report opinions or convictions instead of phenomena and fact. We expect to know the things, not from their mere talk about them, but from the things themselves, challenged by investigation, tested carefully by experiment. In the same way God will not have so many of those departed come back as travelers abroad, to be reporters and talkers of knowledge for us; for he wants to have us go directly to the subjects of duty—all subjects of a moral and spiritual nature—and learn what they are from themselves. Too much report and talk would ruin us, we should never know any thing at first hand, if we were all the while obtruded upon by revelations of message and story. Real conviction goes before talk, and is grounded in the soul's own thinking of subjects and questions themselves. Real faith is not something talked into us, but a most inward perception of that which is inwardly revealed. Real principle comes, not after society and social communication, but goes before them rather, certifying immortality and heaven and future society for itself. I think we know more of the grand world-future before us from Paul's handlings of the great truths in his written epistles, contriving how to get them based in thought and verified by it, than we should from the reports he might give us of his experience, in case he should return. The very excitement he would raise by his testimonies might render us less capable of understanding what is in the subjects themselves. Indeed, there probably could not be a greater hinderance to the sober and rationally solid convictions of duty and religion, than to have all the glorified spirits of the upper world crowding about us in verbal talk and testimony.

It is also another and very great consideration, as regards the moral uses of non-intercourse established between worlds, that it shuts away the lighter, less capable modes of benefit, with a view to put us more completely in the power of such as have greater competency. There is, for example, no really competent revelator for a soul but God himself, and this is exactly the revelation that he undertakes to give. Saints coming back could only report what they have seen; but God, by his all-present Spirit, is able to be a presence of truth itself in the secret chambers of the mind; to blazon himself and his counsel and his feeling and all that belongs to his eternity in the inner sense itself. To let the soul get occupied, therefore, with much talk, and heated by the very dear society of so many glorious strange-comers, would be to inflict upon it a very great loss. To be still with God and only hear him whisper signifies a great deal more. Such kind of knowledge is not talked into the soul, but thought into it. There is no clatter in it drowning the sense, but it is born from within, out of God's deep silence. That silence, therefore, is kept for us, undisturbed by voices and oracular spirits, who might rather confound than teach by their too friendly interruptions. It is not denied, in this manner, that we really want all that we regret the not having in our state of non-intercourse with the departed; it is only assumed that God himself can be, and will be, a more sufficiently, deeply informing power. They could only externalize something in words: he can work convictions, knowledges, presentiments, that shall be inward states. Living in our sensuous habit, we perhaps think otherwise, and therefore wish that spirits from the other world might come and talk with us; but the very reason why they do not is that, having the eternal Father himself with us, their stories in our ears would be only a feeble impertinence.

Still, it will be imagined perhaps that the one great subject of immortality would be set in evidence by the report of departed spirits, as it could not by any divine impressions or informing revealments within. This exactly is the claim put forward so often by our necromantic gospelers. Before, they could not, as they tell us, believe any thing about this matter of immortality; they lived in the dark, and could only think of death as a lapse into nothingness. Now they know that there is a future state; friends whom they loved have come back to them and told them all about their new experience. Thank God, they are sure of something now beyond this life, and the condition they are in borders, they will say, on ravishment itself. Now, the simple answer to be made here is, that the continent they have discovered is a real continent, only not more real than it would be if it had been sooner discovered, in God's more genuine, less superficial way. Have they not some reason still to doubt the necromantic oracles; and is not the very close approach they have made to jugglery a rather uncomfortable source of evidence for a truth so serious and sublime? Suppose, instead, they had simply let their vast religious nature open itself to God's full movement within, and that so they had become conscious of God himself, knowing and receiving him by his immediate revelation. What is that consciousness of God but an implied consciousness of immortality? And which is better, the soul itself awakened inwardly to the sense of its own inborn eternity, or the soul put on thinking itself immortal by the verbal message of friends who are now beyond the gulf spelling out their reports, by such tokens perhaps as will make up an evidence without much help of dignity? It is certainly most strange that men will go so far, and even strain their faculty under such prodigious tricks of charlatanism, to make out the confidence of immortality, when it is even natural to them as their breath, and would never be doubted for a moment, if they could consent to simply be as in God—apart from whom, as the complement and divine light of their spirit, they have no more real possibility of being, than a day without the sun. Having eyes to see the houses on the other side of the river, is it incredible that such houses exist, till the occupants themselves come over and tell us that they do?

Our argument here is summed up in the fact that God himself is teacher enough, a teacher indispensable and really more effective, when interruptions of talk and irruptions of talkers, from the unseen world, are shut away. And yet there is a certain ground of reason, I must also concede, for the desire we have to receive sensible visitations, and visitors appearing to the senses, from the unseen world. As neglectors of God we live in the senses, and get stalled in the senses; so that finally our chief inlets appear to be there, and we scarcely make out the reality of any thing which does not meet us in some visible shape or audible accent. Christ, therefore, came to be incarnate among us, and to be that revelation of God in the flesh, that is required by the shutting up of our higher modes of perception. He comes down from above, just as we are wishing often that our departed friends might come, wondering in much sadness that they do not. He brings all knowledge of the worlds unseen with him, and even the glory that he had with the Father before the world was. He knows more about the great future than all the dead that have ever died, and, what is more, he understands exactly what we most want to know, and he can tell it so as to put more real evidence into it, than their whole cloud of witnesses testifying together. He is visible as we can wish him to be, audible as visible; nay, he is so completely one with us in our human society, that we count him a man, and think we have the table of his human genealogy. By this act God means to comfort us, in just that sensuous want, which puts us on complaining of the non-intercourse act that fences us in. And the design is to recall us by a visitation that shall enter him back, and enter his unseen kingdom back into souls, by the sense thus awakened. But not even he must stay too long. Three short years were the limit of his public appearing, and he declared himself that it was expedient, or practically best for him to go away and let the Comforter, or unseen Father, come into his place and be his own immediate witness. If, then, it would not do for him to stay longer, if it would rather put us under the senses and sensuous evidences, than help us up through them, how much greater damage will it do us to have departed friends rushing back upon us, displacing him by their multitude, and the merely curious matters of their personal story, and holding us back from God's internal teaching, by the hum of so many voices filling the air about us. If we want the visible, as to a certain very limited extent we do, are these multitudes going to add any thing to Christ? Is he not a witness more significant than they all? Is he not as truly from their unseen world? Is there not more light in him and more future than they have ever seen? And when they come to thrust themselves in between us and him, what are they but a hinderance to our benefit in him? The very thing we want in them is given us in him, in a form so simple and pure and grandly concentrated, that their petty figures come upon the stage only to confound our attention and tempt the weakness of our curiosity. *Procul, procul, este!*

We discover in this manner that we do not have our state of non-intercourse established, because no such intercourse with the unseen world could be allowed, but because we have it already provided, in a way so impressive, that we can not afford to be taken off from it, or to have our attention divided. The next best thing, if there were no Christ in the world, might be to have the good souls flocking back as birds of passage, but it would not do for them, in such a case, to stay for a single half week; for the tumult of mind they would raise must very shortly make it expedient for them to go away, and leave us more to our God-instructed thoughts, and the deep-set ineradicable convictions of our religious mind.

I will only add in closing, to prevent misunderstanding, that our desire to know the good condition of our friends, and to have the sense of their company for its own sake, is a natural desire, and seems to be graciously provided for. I have spoken already of the revelations or open states of access, that are possibly implied in congenial affinities. This open state in us appears to be that opening of heaven of which Christ speaks, declaring that the angels of God shall be distinguished ascending and descending through it. It is the nature of every mind set open by good, to have the commerce and felt presence of all the good. They will not come to the senses, or speak with us by their voices, but there will be a sense of their company unseen, and their friendly help. They will be nigh in sacred power, as a kind of good possession, proving their friendship and flavoring the mind with their peace. In this manner we are permitted a most real society with them, such as comforts our external separation, and takes away the pangs of our unreasonable sorrow. Any thing more, or different from this, it is very clear, would rather work our detriment than our benefit.

IX.

OF WINTER.

It is most remarkable that we have, in our winter, a whole season of the year that bears a look of unbenignity. We can not say or think that God is cold here to his children, but no reverence can hide it from us, in these winter months of the year, that his physical treatment is fearfully chill and severe. A pitiless,stern aspect rests upon the world. The forests stand brown and bare. There is no song in their tops; they only roar and crackle to the blast in their frozen branches. Lake and river bellow to the winds afar, as if monsters shut under by the freezing were tearing to be free. The world's body is not dressed, but shrouded rather, looking all the colder that we see it in a laying out of white, unflushed by mortal sympathy. God's tenderness appears to be quite shut away, or shut in, by his cold. The animals stand crouching in their yards, or under copse or wall, holding their heads low to the storm, as if missing God's pity in it. The little child whom Christ would have taken up so fondly in his arms gets stalled in the snows, and when his hands are freezing screams imploringly for help, but help is nowhere, and God's unpitying cold goes on to freeze him as remorselessly as if he were a man. The trav eler is overtaken at night on the prairie, by a howling, wildly driving storm; all trace of a road is gone; his point of direction is lost, and he drives still on, still round and round, passing more than once quite near the light which his wife has set in her window. She is praying that God will spare him; he himself is praying that God will spare him for her dear sake and his children's; but it is as if the prayers themselves were falling under the snow—two days afterward he and his exhausted team are found upright and stiff in a snow-bed miles away.

Physically speaking, this is the picture of God's winter. Does it represent him? Certainly it does in some true sense, though not in any such general and complete sense as to yield a just conception of him. Many of God's doings and appointments do not represent his feeling or disposition, but they only represent the more truly his counsel, his purpose, his ends of discipline, his modes of compelling industry, begetting reflection, setting fast habits of attention, consolidating attributes of strength that are wanted to compose a manly character. In this manner we shall see that God is represented rather by the moral uses of winter, than by winter itself. Turning our thoughts in this direction then, we shall find enough to satisfy us; nay, we shall see the benignity of God unfolded here, if not more tenderly, yet more convincingly, than in any of the softer seasons of the year.

Some persons have thought that God would have shown his goodness more perfectly, if he had planned to omit the winter altogether. Thus, if he had made the world a cylinder instead of a sphere, setting its axis in the same line, he would have given us a perfectly equal season, they say, up to the very ends of the cylinder, throughout the year. To urge the inconvenience in such a case, of an endwise attraction, balancing itself at the center, and growing stronger each way from the center, is probably unnecessary. But if all the waters and the atmosphere must be sliding down toward the mid-circle or equator, if the people farther north and south must be living thus on a stairway, and climbing it with heavier lift, as they approach the ends, there to find themselves on a mountain 4,000 miles high, these and the other consequent inconveniences—breathing without air, and cooking without fire, and cultivating growths without ever a possibility of rain—might be many times greater than to have a winter. Nine-tenths of the cylinder would be a desert. The less we amuse ourselves by such kind of suggestions, and the more steadily we set ourselves to look after the moral benefits designed for us in the ordinance of winter as it is, the better satisfaction shall we obtain.

First of all, then, we need to observe that it may be a very great point for us to have some whole season, or considerable department of our life, so ordered as to show that God's beneficence is not always concerned, of course, in the promotion of physical ends. The supreme utilities with us are physical, and we look to see God planning every thing to serve the ends we value, viz., physical ends—in that proving his beneficence. Even Dr. Paley himself, who ought to make some principal account of ends and uses more religious, falls into the way of the general world-worship, contriving always to show how this or that fulfills some end or use within the compass of nature itself; as when beasts of prey or venom are shown to have their use, not morally, but in keeping down the over-multiplication of beasts. Raising this kind of argument, we should have it on hand to show the beneficence of winter, by the mere physical ends and uses it serves, and that might not be easy. Do animals and children grow faster because of the cold? Do we make up our supplies more easily, for having a whole third part of the year given up to consumption, while producing nothing? Is the pasture more sufficient, for lying dead under the snow a full third part of the year? Are the roads more advantageous that they are made impassable?—the rivers and lakes that they are put under embargo by ice? Are the rocks and trees that are rifted by frost made any the better for it? Is the landscape improved by stripping it? Do the howling storms of winter cherish any thing fruitful or kill any thing noxious? The remarkable thing here, in this matter of winter, is that, as far as we can see, almost no single end of our mere physical life is at all advanced by it. It is as if God took us off here into a field, where nothing is done for physical ends, to show us on how large a scale he builds, and governs, and works, for ends that are superior, and even such as lie beyond the world itself. He does it more or less, sometimes here and sometimes there, in the other seasons of the year; but here he does it, as it were by system, on the largest scale possible; calling us to observe that he has other, higher ends, beyond all terms of mere physical beneficence. It may be that we do not consciously take up any such conclusion, by a distinct intellectual recognition. But we are thrown, practically, into a state of moral impression that corresponds. Our God is not a summer God only, but a winter God, ruling with stout emphasis, and caring visibly less for all mere comfort, than for the grand prerogatives and rigors of principle. The immense moral benefit of such impressions can not easily be over-estimated. It does not show us all God's contrivances in the creation, tapering off into some mere physical use, but it shows him dropping out of sight, and, as it were, forgetting all physical uses, for whole months in the year, to bring on the other, higher uses that relate more especially to character and worlds beyond the world.

It has not escaped the notice of physicians and physiologists, that winter effects a marked change in our bodily habit and temperament. The diseases are generally of a different type, and health itself is a different experience. In summer the senses are more awake, and the body has free communication with nature through every gate and pore of the skin. In the winter these gates are closed, and the vital force retreats to its cell, to fan the fires and sustain the internal heat, by extra exertion there. We fold our cloak instinctively about us, and ask to be separated from nature by walls that are impervious. It is impossible that so great a change should not powerfully affect the tone and temperament of the mind—a fact which many have not failed to observe. We have thus a summer mind and a winter mind. The distinction is not as wide as between the state of sleep and the waking state. Neither is it any way analogous, and yet it is not less real. The mind works differently and has different proclivities in the winter. It is less given up to sensation—it is even fighting off sensation a great part of the time. Passion is moderated and keyed more closely in the terms of order and reason. The delectations and delicate pleasures of summer life are farther off, and as much less desired. In a perpetual summer life, as in the tropics, they all but macerate the soul's capacities ; but where there is a good interspersing of winter habit, a more rugged and more distinctly moral temperament is induced. The mind has a closer affinity with moral subjects, thinks responsibility with more of traverse and high understanding, and puts itself down upon all great questions of religion, with more of appetite and a steadier mastership.

The contrast observable here between summer and winter life, in respect to the habit or capacity of reflection, is specially remarkable. Self-indulgence, luxury, and a free bathing of sensation in the world's temperatures and odors make soft motive for us in the summer, and lull us in a softening element. We seek the out-door shade and open air, and the motion of our being is outward, away from its own centre. The songs of the morning are music in our ear. The air is laden with incense. Scenes of beauty open to the eye, and we fill ourselves all day with images of freshness and life. All which is of the highest use—it is even necessary to the furniture of the mind. But it requires a time of reflection afterward, to enable us to realize the moral benefits prepared. After the mind has received the summer into its storehouse, then it wants the winter, as a time wherein to review and con over its stores. Then let the summer wane, and the autumnal frost begin to whiten the plain. Let the songs be hushed, the verdure fall off, and the scented air breathe only cold. Let the snows spread their blanket over the dead world, and the wintry blasts howl vengefully and wild. Now the senses lose their objects, and the man, not as being moved inwardly, but frost-nipped rather without, gathers in his mind to reflection. And there he finds gathered in also all the images of the creation, himself among them present also to himself. Their meanings, monitions, suggestions, and the matter-forms of thought there are in them, throng in to his aid. He hears the whispers of his conscience, and thinks of other worlds. Every prospect without forbidding and desolate, and the in-door fire more attractive in his evenings than any walk abroad, he is shut up, in a sense, even wontedly, to his chamber, and to thoughts that relate to his own being and well-being. If he ever cogently and closely thinks, it will probably be now. If he is ever seriously bent to the very highest concern-ments of his nature, he is likely to be so now. There is more of tone in his moral perceptions than at other times. Truth is seen more clearly, and his soul rings like a bell under its touch, because he is undiverted by things without, and thought is single in its action.

Now, it is well understood that the mind never attains to great intellectual strength without first forming a habit of reflection. And the same is necessary to a vigorous pronouncement of the moral man—the conscience, the spiritual emotions, and the religious aspirations. Hence the well-known superficiality and the great intellectual and moral dearth of the tropical climates. Having no winter, they have no capacity of deep, well-invigorated reflection, and no firm condensation of thoughtful temperament. Their moral nature especially wants the true frigorific tension of a well wintered life and experience. For it is often observed, partly because the habit is more reflective, and partly for other reasons, that men have a stronger sense of principles in winter, than at any other time. They see them invested with a certain rigor and severity, like the season itself. Or, perhaps, without making any such comparison, they do, by a certain force of association, behold them, as they do the trunks of the forest, standing in their pure anatomy, curtained by no garniture of leaves, and stretching their bare, stiff limbs to the sky. Hence the contrast between tropical consciences, which are out-door, self-indulgent, unpronouncing consciences, and those which have been trained in the more rugged and severe climes of the

North. Who that understands the moral efficacy of climates would undertake to form a Scotch people, or New England people, as to the sense of principles, in either Central America or Jamaica?

In the same way, we are made more conscious of our moral and religious wants in the winter, than we are in the softer, balmier seasons. If we can judge from the feeding of the swine on the ripened products of the year, the parable of the prodigal son is a winter parable in its date. He came also to himself, and began to be in want, because it was a time of short allowance. The intimation therefore is, that the sense of guilt and hunger in the moral nature is the needed precondition of all highest spiritual good; and when but in the winter shall this necessary sense of want be wakened? Let every thing about the man be an image of the dearth and coldness of a cold heart. Surround him with winter as a counterpart to the winter of the mind. Cut him off from the diversions and half-satisfactions of his summer pleasures, take away the sceneries and prospects that relieve the tedium of an empty heart. Shut him up to himself, leaving no resource, save what he finds in himself. And then, if ever, he will be likely to feel the stir of those sublime, everlasting wants, that put all moral natures reaching after God. In this matter, it is not the question simply, what a cold, blank soul may be put on thinking, by the experiences and sceneries of winter. We have a great many gospelings that do not come to thought, or work by thought at all, but only by the states or impressions they beget in ways more immediate; even as hymns do not take our head by their mere creed matter, but play themselves straightway into sentiments. And so it is that God's great ordinance of snow—the blank of it, the white of it, and the cold, and the readiness to be dissolved and pass away—is just that power on human feeling most profoundly adapted to the fit movement of the soul's immortal want. It is a kind of scenery felt to be both congenial and chill; answering faithfully to the dreary chill of hunger that pinches the bosom within.

Analogous to this effect of winter and closely related, is the fact that we are more capable of realizing invisible sceneries and worlds in the winter, than at any other time. God is more vividly imaged to the mind, we can not but admit, in the sceneries, and showers, and dews of summer. It appears to be intimated also, that our paradise will have tropical attractions, yielding twelve manner of fruits—a fruit every month—but the time to realize these invisible things of God and his paradise is when a pall is thrown over things visible that have a resemblance. Thus it would be very unskillful if any one, having it for his problem how to produce the most vivid impression of the beauties of paradise—the river clear as crystal, the golden sands, the trees of life blooming fast by the river—were to choose the time when spring is bursting into leaf and flower, and the odors are floating, and the music warbling on the air. In that case he will only raise an impression that the good world's delectations are about on a par with our present, which does not after all appear to be very superlatively blessed; whereas, if he should rather choose the dreary and bleak winter, when the creation is desolate and bare, he would call on our imaginations to paint the picture, and be sure that they would make it blessed above all fact—as superlatively blessed as it need be. It must also be remembered that the invisible things of religion will be just as much more real in the winter, as the want of them is more impressively felt; as much more real as their principles are more distinctly apprehended; as much more real as the power of thought is more separated from the distractions of the senses.

It is also another very grand moral advantage of winter, that the will of man, or the voluntary power of his nature, becomes more erect, more vigorously attent and determinate, under that kind of experience. One of the most remarkable distinctions of the men of tropical climates is that they seem to have no will; that is, no such steadiness and persistent grasp of will, as amounts to a capacity of high resolve and determinate action. They bask, they float, they are delicate and sensitive, but far too inefficient commonly for any decisive kind of action. The nearest approach they make to it is in their gustiness and the tempest-rage of their passion; but here the very thing most wanting is a will that has force enough to master their impulse, and steady their self-government. To breast oppositions, stem currents, fight causes, resolve on changes or amendments, rise above misfortunes, seems impossible. How many tropically-nurtured martyrs have we ever heard of? And we need not quit our zone to learn the reason. Who of us does not observe that, in the heat of summer he is languid, faint, averse to resolution. We even call the summer the languid season. We also speak of the bracing winter, by which we mean that we have nerve to do, determine, plan, withstand, endure—in a word, that we have now a new installment of will, and so of practical energy. Now, therefore, is the time when we shall be girded to the closest mental attention, and shall most distinctly comprehend our own moral state and want. And what we discover we shall set ourselves in firmest resolution to do; to mend our defects, renounce our sins, revolutionize our habits, take up our crosses, enter into new duties and hopes, and pluck up courage, in God's help, to begin a new and a better life. All this we may do in the summer, it is true; but we are far more likely to do it in the winter, or in the neighboring season of spring, when the tonic force of one is passing into the softening genialities of the other.

We shall also discover, what will be more impressive to many, that winter has a practical effect, in a large way, on the economic and social conditions of life, that is in the highest degree beneficial to character. Winter is not commonly productive, but is rather a time of expenditure. And in this way it impels, by the most stringent motive possible, to habits of industry and providence, which are the acknowledged conservators and securities of character. A few of the trades find their harvest-time in the winter, but, for the greater part of society, summer is the productive season. And they do well if they do not consume in the winter all which their summer produces. As production falls off or diminishes, expenditure is, by the same causes, enlarged. The comfort of the house is to be maintained by artificial heat, which makes a large expense. The body requires heavier, more expensive clothing. It also requires a larger quantity of more substantial food to sustain its internal heat. Meantime the herds of domestic animals are kept in life through the winter by generous supplies, which it has cost many acres of land and whole months of labor to provide. Income is nowhere; out-go is the general law. And then, when the spring and summer return, the same winter stock is to be provided over again for the inevitable expenditure. Every thing is hung on providence, and the man who will not provide can not live. He must bow himself to industry, and then what he creates he must store, and keep in careful husbandry. And so, by the very drill of life, he is trained to a cautionary, fore-looking habit. He is no such man as he would be, if nature were pouring out her bounties to him all the year. And as he provides for the winter, carefully gathering and storing what will stock his comfort, it will be strange, if his very habit does not sometimes set him on forecasting the wants and necessities of a life beyond life. And then, having gotten this also provided, he will have it in his heart to borrow a larger lesson from the winter. He will be no more churlish, or barren of gratitude, in so much of expenditure; but seeing that God gives for expenditure, and that in this all his gifts have their value, he will set his fireside comforts in contrast with the bleak and dreary desolations around him, and will thank God, with a full and tender heart, for the supplies of his year. His industry, making suit to God as to the soil and the seasons, and his temperate life-care in the provisioning of his wants, are in one view a drill, in another a hymn. We might think that the people of a tropical climate would, of course, be more religiously bent, and more grateful. And yet they are likely to even forget what gratitude means. They receive their blessings as a thing of course, and being occupied always with receiving, and having no separate time of use and expenditure, their blind selfish habit runs them by all remembrance even of the giver. Nature pours out her flood upon them, and they receive it as they receive the air, without any sense of its value, or the bounty which it signifies.

The moral benefit of winter is also great, super-eminently great, in the contributions it makes to home-life, and the fine moral serenities of a close family state. Home is a northern word, not found in the languages of the tropical nations. Living out of doors, reclining under shades, or strolling here and there at any time of day or night for the whole year, families are less regularly gathered into a home circle, or any thing which can be called domestic proximity. They take the habit of the herds, in part, and their passions are as much loosened as their domestic ties. It is only at the hearth where the winter fire is kindled, and the family is gathered into close companionship, that fatherhood and motherhood, and the other tender relationships, become bonds of unity and consciously felt concern. A whole half-year spent at the hearth—mornings there begun with prayer, long evenings enlivened by mutual society and common studies, books opening their treasures, games their diversions—this it is that condenses a home. Nothing can buy it or bring it to pass, without help of winter as the prime condition. A "Cotter's Saturday Night" in the tropics! who can imagine it? Winter then, we are to see, is that best educator, in whose school spring all the thousand nameless influences that guard the life, strengthen its principles, and save its affections from vagrancy and dissipation. There is no moral influence not immediately religious that is so essential to virtue and religion, as this most untropical institution that we call a home.

Thus far we have been occupied in tracing certain particular results of character operated by winter climates. I wish it were possible, taking a different way, to sketch the many impressive scenes or occasions of winter, that are working always, perhaps unobserved, results not less important. As I can name only two or three, notice, for one, the almost religious impression of the winter storms. The tropical storms, such as the hurricane of our southern seas, and the cyclone of the eastern, are far more violent—so violent or furious as to be simply terrible, and to leave no moral impression at all. But our winter storm gathers up its force more thoughtfully, as if moving only great instigations;

driving steadily on, with a roar that is, at once, the voice of power and of cold. We imagine certain rigors of eternal majesty in the sound, hearing it with only the deeper, more considerate awe, that we apprehend no damage or danger from it. The driven snow-dust fills the air and whitens on the window-panes, so that seeing nothing without, we can only sit by our fire and hear the commotion; save that we feel the jar of it also now and then, when the gusty shocks of broadside pressure butt upon the house. Waking in the night, when the storm is at its highest pitch of emphasis, we meditate composedly, yet how distinctly, God, who saith to the snow, "Be thou on the earth," and by such voice of majesty executes his word. The storm is only such as we have seen many times, and are likely again to see more than once before the spring arrives, and therefore we think less of it than we should. And yet, if we recall our impressions, we perceive that under this same winter-piece, performed by God's aërial orchestra, we have had our soul in vibration, as never under any combinations of art and instrument and voice, that have won the greatest applause. It had no rhythm, it was not a movement of time and harmony, but it was a grand chromatic of the creation, that we felt all through, heaving out our soul in tremulous commotion before God. It is impossible that such experiences should not have a powerfully predisposing effect in our capacities for religion.

Consider also the moral value of winter as a time for charity. In the summer, God pours out his bounty so freely that even the idle and improvident will scarcely miss their needed supply. Not even the invalid will often suffer. In the winter he withholds, that we may so far take his place, and seek out the beneficiaries, and dispense the benefactions of Providence, for him. To prepare a way of suffering, in order to prepare occasions for charity, would, of course, be a harsh and very unequal method of beneficence. If that were all, it would only be a sacrifice of one class, to promote the virtues of another. But where there is much idleness and vice, there ought to be much suffering, and it appears to be even a fault of the tropics that they do not bring suffering enough. It would be much better, as far as we can judge, if the profligate and worthless were more severely handled; for the examples of retribution would be more impressive, and the cogent forms of misery would furnish appeals of charity, sufficiently strong and frequent to make it one of the common humanities. In this respect the winter climates have a great advantage. They have the further advantage that the conditions of hunger and cold authenticate themselves. If there is no fire, the lack can be seen. If there is no sufficient covering, the fact is not difficult to be distinguished. The poor child found in rags, asking bread, and saying by his piteous, crouching look, "Who can stand before His cold?" wants no certificate. In the howling cold of the night, sheltered in our warm, comfortably-tempered chamber, we have reason enough to be thinking of the poor, uncovered, shivering creatures not far off, and we can certainly find them to-morrow. Some of us, it may be, do not much value these tender humanities and really divine ministries. We dispatch them sometimes gruffly, it may be, and without the tenderness, and yet the moral benefit we all receive is greater than we can estimate—all the greater, of course, when we learn to claim our privilege in such offices of mercy and true brotherhood.

I will name one other occasion, or contingency of winter, that sometimes takes a wonderfully strong hold of our religious instinct, and often produces effects more decisive than we trace ourselves. I speak of our winter funerals. To bury a friend in winter is a kind of trial that connects strange inward commotions of feeling which it is difficult to master. We have cleared away the snow and hewn a passage down through the solid pavement of the frost, and there, in that inhospitable place, we come to bury our departed; be it child, or wife, or mother, or much loved friend. Our heart shudders, in convulsive chill, at the forlorn last offices we are come to perform. While our feeling is protesting, the solemnity, so called, goes on, and before we have gotten our own consent, the "tribute of respect" is ended. The frozen chips of earth, loosened again by blows, are piled on the loved one's rest, and we turn to go. "Will it storm to-night? The wind, alas! is howling even now in the trees, and the sleeting is already begun. O God, it shall not be! We were going to be fools, we see, but now the spell is broken. Our departed is not in that hole, and we scorn to say our farewell over it! Let the snows fall heavy, if they will, and the winds rage pitiless and wild above, ours it shall be to thank thee, Father, Lord of the warmer clime, that our dead one lives with thee." Practically almost nothing will more surely compel a faith in immortality, even if one chances to be unbelieving, than to bury a friend in the winter. And, as a matter of fact, it is not in the fresh, outbursting life of the spring, or in any softer season of the year, that we think of immortality with half the tension that we do at the winter funerals. We ask it instinctively, as we do a fire for the cold.

We have it then, for our conclusion, that if we have some physical reason to complain of our harsh and rugged climate, morally speaking it stands well. Regarding only personal and moral vigor, and the supreme interests of character, it is a climate thoroughly respectable, and is not a whit too severe. Many think it a great misfortune that our excellent fathers did not push their way farther south, at their landing, and seek out a softer and more genial clime. There is no greater folly, as facts most conclusively show. If there be any people on earth who have reason to accuse their climate, it is they who enjoy a perennial season of growth and verdure, and a soft and sunny sky throughout the year. There it is that mind also is soft, enervated by ease and luxury. There it is that eternity offers beauty and bloom to minds that can not be moved by their attraction, and virtue her stern requirements to souls too much relaxed by habits of ease and passion to be girded by sentiments of high responsibility. After all, the best favors of God are those which take on shapes of rigor and necessity, and prepare the strongest hunger in us for the good of a world invisible. The advantages of the body are poor and mean compared with the advantages of character and religion. Understanding thus our want, we shall thank God most for the frosts, and the snows, and the sleet, and the bleak winds, and the raw dank seasons interspacing the cold. We shall be like the trees coated in gems of ice and glittering in thankfulness before Him. For the winter of the body is, in some very true sense, the summer of the mind. What softer clime then shall the sons of New England envy—wading to their temples on the hills through wintry snows, gathered at their firesides in domestic mutualities and pleasures, trained to close economy and patient industry by the even balance of growth and expenditure, rugged in their virtues as in their experience of hardship, firm in their conscience, clear in their religious convictions, and knowing how to gild the rigors of time with glories of future expectation. Who, again we ask, of all that bask in the warmth of skies more genial, have they to envy?

It is most remarkable, too, and a fair subject of congratulation, that the Christian sense of winter, if we should not rather say the Christian providence of times, makes an election of seasons that so nearly corresponds with the choice, or good fortune, of our fathers; for the great church days most consecrated by observances of religion are days in winter, and of early spring—such as the festivals of the Nativity and of Easter and the forty days of Lent, with others that might be named. Whether the institution of Lent is fixed in its particular season, because that is a time when mind is more congenially tempered for the higher meditations and severer exercises of religion, some perhaps may question, but any one can see that a Lent in July and August would have much less chance of the intended benefit. We may also observe that the time selected coincides, as nearly as may be, with the season of the year most commonly distinguished by what in other modes of church order, not observing Lent, are rather unhappily called revivals of religion. And it turns out in both modes alike, and for reasons that are really the same, that the winter becomes, in some practical and special sense, the harvest time of religion. It is so, not as many cavilers will say, because the Christian people have done up their business, and made their money, and, having nothing else to do, are going to do up their religion; but it is because the tonic force of winter gives a possibility of thought and mental tension, specially needed for the most resolute and really most earnest exercises of devotion. It is also a considerable advantage, that we love proximity in winter, and covet more easily the warmth of assemblies and of high social impulse. And since the Spirit of God has it as a law of divine wisdom, to work most powerfully in seasons that best work with him, what should we expect but that his widest movements of grace, whether called by one name or another, will be revealed in the times of winter?

It follows, we must also observe, that we all have a gift of personal advantage in the winter that we can not afford to lose. Now is the time to meditate all our most serious concerns of life anew. If the main question is still unsettled, or unattended to, there is no other so good time for a duty that requires so much of concentration. If we have grown slack in our principles, now is the time to set them up and be ourselves set up in their company. If the fascinations of time have stolen us away from the invisible good, now is the time to set our gaze more steadfastly on it, when the good that is visible is frosted, and hid under snows from the sight. Now is the time to be rational and strong, to revise our mistakes, shake off our self-indulgences, prepare our charities, justify our friendships, shed a sacred influence over our families, set ourselves to the service of our country and our God, by whatever cost of sacrifice. Doing this, as we may, it will not much concern us, I think, if our flight should also be in the winter.

X.

OF THINGS UNSIGHTLY AND DISGUSTFUL.

God's thought is beauty; and as he creates in the form of his thought, his creation must, we infer, represent his beauty. The argument goes further; for as God's mind is all-beautiful or infinite in beauty, so the world must be an infinitely beautiful world. And yet it visibly is not, but a great way from it. If we take up the opinion that it is, by no inference but only by reverence, still we cannot stop our eyes by reverence; and the moment we open them, we see as distinctly as we see any thing, that perfect beauty is not here. No matter if we recoil from such a conclusion, as one that takes away the possible proof of God's existence, then that possible proof must go; for there is nothing more certainly discovered, than that we have immense disfigurements, and objects and airs intensely disgustful, in the world's composition. And, what is more, these uncomely or revolting elements in the picture are not incorporated by accident, or oversight, or some precedent necessity, but, as far as we can see, by deliberate purpose and plan. No animal, for example, is created by any thing less than a sovereign act; therefore, when we encounter buzzards and many beasts of prey, who neither relish, nor will eat any thing which is not flavored and thoroughly cooked by decomposition, this is their nature, we infer, the original instinct of their kind, and was just as truly created in them as their anatomy. These are facts which no possible gloss can hide, and they are thick sown among the sceneries, the odors and flowers, and all the blooming beauties of the world. What shall we make of them? A very difficult and immensely significant question.

A different verdict is, I know, quite commonly accepted. A great many religious writers volunteer it as a point of reverence, without any thought of being critically responsible for it, and a great many poets and professed expounders of nature also speak as if it were a point to be taken by admission, that the works of God are in God's beauty and exclude the possible right of qualification. They are so captivated by what they call nature, and luxuriate with such fondness in the poetical fervors kindled in their fancy by what they call his beauty, that they often disrelish and recoil from the revealed religion of the Scriptures, however beautifully or magnificently revealed, preferring to indulge what they conceive to be a religion more tasteful; viz., the admiration of God as discovered in the natural objects around them. And yet, even such, without raising at all the question how far they are consistent in it, will be playing their criticism every hour on the defective sceneries, and the unsightly, disproportioned shapes of nature, showing that not even their superlatively tasteful religion is tasteful enough to satisfy their own ideals. They quite agree with us still, that no bog, or swamp, or heath, or desert, or dead plain, or stagnant water, no slimy reptile, or carrion bird is a beautiful object. They plainly do not think a howling wilderness at all comparable in beauty to a cultivated landscape; allowing without scruple, that nature from the hand of God requires to be retouched and finished by the hand of man. And whatever field of nature they find so drenched with water, or parched with drought, or pinched with cold, that no industry or art of man can improve it, they conceive to be unsightly, irredeemable waste. They have also what they call "foul days" and "nasty weather;" and when they are able to say "it is a perfect day," they mean that it is an exceptional, uncommon, superlative day.

So far, we all agree, however much or little we have to say of the perfect beauty of nature. We discover disproportions and blemishes, we are annoyed by things distasteful, we suffer many disgusts. And we go so far in this involuntary criticism, that when we come to the human form itself, which is the noblest and choicest of all, we find no single member of the race that perfectly fulfills our ideas of beauty—not even our utmost conceit can look in the glass, without thinking of some feature that might be greatly improved. And we are even accustomed to assume, without scruple, that considering height, proportion of parts, perfection of single members, complexion, gait, posture, expression, no man or woman ever existed, in whom the practiced eye could discover no blemish—no excess, or defect, or false conjunction. Hence it is steadily assumed as a first maxim of art, that the perfect beauty is not, but is to be, created. We do not say that all are deformed, and yet with the single qualification, "more or less," it would hardly be an extravagance. Some limb is awry, some member too long or too short, some feature too sharp or too clumsy. Indeed, the remarkable thing is that, conceiving man, as we do, to be created in the image of God, we meet so very few persons, in the intercourse of life, that awaken at all, our sense of beauty. We have, in fact, a way of saying that a person is *common*, as denoting an unattractive, badly molded figure and look.

I have been careful, it will be observed, in the making up of this picture, to give it in its softest, least exaggerated form. My object has not been to frame an impeachment of nature, but a respectful and suitably delicate representation rather. It would be easy to draw up specifications of scenes, and facts, and processes, that would make a hideously disagreeable, or even revolting picture, but the taste of one who should do it would probably suffer the principal infliction itself. It would be as when a Jumbo occupies whole years of industry in molding a circumstantial and minutely particular representation of the horrible and disgusting charnel made by the plague in the streets of Florence. It was bad enough that such a scene must be, as an event of Providence, but a great deal worse that any kind of art should labor at the picture, and work up the hideous details, by which it may be formally perpetuated. I prefer to take the milder, mildest possible conception of the uncomely and disgustful matters in the field of nature; for we shall have enough to do, in that case, to make out an account of them sufficiently agreeable to satisfy us.

Proceeding now in this endeavor, it will be necessary,—

I. To dispose of certain solutions, or pretended solutions, which are either not permissible, or do not reach the mark.

Thus it may be imagined that God does not like to be imprisoned in his own beauty, but prefers sometimes to assert his liberty, in creating things unshapely and wild; even as some human artist, who could easily conceive more beautiful things, chooses the less beautiful, with a view to certain humorous and grotesque effects, or to certain moral effects that depend on acts of mercy to the lame, or leprous, or the outcast poor. But the point to be first noted here is that the artist is studying, nevertheless, in his choice, what will help him to command effects most beautiful in the particular field or subject chosen. How far the dignity of God permits the supposition that he indulges the grotesque and dramatic by-play of sentiment in this way need not here be discussed, for it is only a very small part of the unsightly and hideous deformities of nature that can, by any possibility, be classed in that manner. They are too disgustful and repulsive, too dreadfully serious, to be thought of as contributions for dramatic sentiment of any kind. Besides, the disgustful and hideous points of nature are not given pictorially, but really. If the artist were not painting lepers or lunatics, but creating them, we should have a very different impression of his work. No advantage, in short, is to be gotten by this kind of argument.

As little can it be said that there is no defect or blemish in nature, but only in our own standards, or ideals of beauty. What then are standards and ideals but just what they are made to be, save that evil must be allowed to have wrought some corruption of our judgments and perceptions under them. The same is to be said of all our perceptions. We have as good reason to confide in our judgments of what is beautiful, or unbeautiful, or disgusting, as we have to confide in our judgments of perspective and color. And we know as well what is out of shape, or hideous, or disgustful, as we do that the sky is blue, or that snow is white, or that righteousness is right. If we can not trust our intuitive perceptions, there is nothing more for us to say. For aught that appears, disgusting odors are as good as perfumes, and deformities are the essence of beauty.

As little can it be imagined that our distastes and condemnatory judgments are due to the lowness and perversity of our criticism; that we find blemishes because it pleases our conceit to find them; that we meet disgusting objects, because we are fastidious enough to be disgusted by what is inherently beautiful; that we take a low-minded pleasure in gloating on deformities, and are too hasty, or short-sighted, to pierce the matters blamed, deeply enough to apprehend their real merit and dignity. Undoubtedly there is a possibility of just this perverse and nauseously absurd way of criticism. But when it is considered that all most rhapsodical admirers of nature as well as all most rigid devotees of science agree in the opinion that fault and blemish, and defect of color, and loathsomeness of look, are largely infused among the objects and scenes of nature, it will be as improbable as it can be, that all our disgusts are due to the distempers of our criticism.

Neither can it be said, with any sufficient show of evidence, that the uncomely and distorted forms of nature were never created, but have resulted, since the creation, from uses that produced the distortion; that the giraffe, for example, has lifted his shoulders and spun out his enormous length of neck, by the habit of browsing on tree-tops; or that the elephant, having the enormous weight of his head to support, at the end of a neck proportionately long, became weary of the burden, and gradually drew in his neck, till it was shortened; pushing out meantime the length of his mouthpiece, till it became a proboscis long enough to reach the ground and gather his supplies of food. We have a strangely disfigured race of fishes, comprising the halibut, the plaice, and the flounder. They swim flatwise on their side, having their back-bone on one margin, and their belly on the other, and their head so far twisted out of place, that a single eye stands up prominent and bold on the top, and the other eye is a little, nearly extinct organ, underneath. These creatures take their prey, it is said, by churning up the mud on the bottom of the ocean and letting it settle upon them for disguise, while they lie in perfect stillness under their thin cloak, waiting for some fish to be discovered, by their beetling eye, swimming directly over them. Then darting up their twisted mouth upon him, they have him for their prey. Now the question springs, at this point, whether these strangely distorted and deformed creatures were made as they are, or whether they have twisted themselves out of all symmetric figure by their practice? If there is some special cunning given them for this practice, then they were so far made for it, and for all the disfigurements they incur from it. And if it is not so, and as good cunning is given to all the other fishes of prey, why has no other family of fishes learned to set their trap in the same way? On the whole, very little can be made of this kind of argument; and, partly for the reason that only a few of the malformations we meet have any thing to do with such physiological practices. The jungles, the swamps, the deserts, the putrid lakes, are malformed plainly by creation, and fill a very much larger chapter.

But it will be said, and often is said, that the deformities and disgusts of nature are all intended as reliefs, to set off the ornamentations and beauties. As there must be discords in music, light and shade in pictures, so there must be contrasts, in order to make up any really perfect landscape, or perfectly composed beauty in things not pertaining to landscape. This is really the most plausible account that can be given of the disfigured and distasteful things in nature. But there is no solid merit of reason in the solution, as we can easily see. Does any artist ever execute one corner of his picture badly, in order to bring out the beauty of his work in the other? What painter ever put a swamp or a desert in his picture, to heighten the pleasing effect of it? Such a thing may have been done, as all absurd things can be, but I happen never to have seen the instance. A reedy lake, or wide-spread shallow, such as the muskrat populations love to inhabit—who ever undertook to set off his landscape by putting it in the foreground, or middle-ground, or anywhere else? What sculptor ever thought to make a leg or an arm more beautiful, by setting a deformed one with it, as we often see in the juxtapositions of nature? The need of contrasts in setting off the charms of things beautiful, is itself a false assumption. Such contrasts are commonly painful. A park and a swamp, a group made up of hags and graces, gambols of life and decays of death—all such misconjunctions are offensive. Light and shade are a wholly different matter, operating not by contrast, but by the magic power of the sun, playing out, in both alike, the forms and colors of the scene it is painting. Things unlike, as rock and water, complement each other, not by contrast, but by joint contributions of beauty. Meantime all the unbeautiful stuff the world contains has abundance of contrasts in it; only it happens that they are so devoid of expression, as to be simply wearisome because of their commonness. Whole regions are too common to raise any thought of a landscape. Farms and localities are common. Multitudes of faces, abundantly unlike, are yet so meagre, and dry, and dreary, that we call them common, and let them go. But it can not be imagined that these commonnesses help, as terms of contrast, to garnish any larger whole. They only whet our appetite for something better by starving us in what they are.

Dismissing, then, all attempts to solve the deformities and disgustful things of nature, on the footing of mere natural criticism, we come—

II. To what is really the chief point of their significance; the moral uses they are fitted and appointed to serve.

And the first of these I name is the broad, every where visible, token of retribution they show imprinted on the world. I do not undertake to say, that all these unsightly and disgustful things are deformities actually caused by the fact of wrong or transgression, appearing for the first time after it. The world was originally made, no doubt, for the occupant, to serve such uses as his moral training would require; and if it was preluding his bad history long before he came, the disgustful tokens were none the less truly fruits of his wrong, than if they had appeared only afterward, as the literal effects of it. The medicines a traveler carries with him, when going into regions infested with plague, are none the less truly dictated by the plague than if they had been chosen after the symptoms appeared. And if any one should think that such a way of regarding the world's deformities and disgusts might diminish or quite take away the impression of any retributive meaning in them, that impression will be cogently affirmed by seeing, every day, new-sprung deformities and disgusts every way correspondent, that are visibly penal reactions and retributive consequences of vicious conduct. When a once robust, handsomely formed, nobly commanding person, has it for his lot as a father, to look on a family of feeble, half-sized, chronically diseased, pitifully deformed children, it is only necessary to speak the word "licentiousness," and we see at a glance by what kind of mill retribution is at work to make one class of deformities. Who that compares the unwieldy and coarse obesity of a gormandizer, and the swinish configurations of his face and mouth, with the fine elastic play of his figure and features before his habit was established, fails to see how surely retribution fits a beastly appetite with a beastly figure. We suffer no revulsion more painful than to look on the stupid unmeaningness and bloat and blear of a thoroughly besotted drinker, and it hardly seems a possibility, that a lump so disgusting can have been made, even by retribution itself, out of a person as finely molded, in a look of expression as attractive, as he is remembered to have worn but a very few years ago. And so it is in the whole moral department of life, where retribution is casting forms and figures, so to speak, for every sort of sin.

If a man has no principles and thinks only of appearances, the affectations he lives in will print themselves on his face and make it an embodied lie. If one lives in cunning only, the foxy character creeps into his eye and motions, and we almost think the man is changing species. Hate, jealousy, petulance, miserhood, envy—every sort of obliquity has its own disfigurement. By so many mills kept running day and night retribution is at work, to manufacture deformities and disgusts. And this we see so often, growing so familiar with the story, that it becomes a general habit with us, to look on the disfigurements and disgusts of the world, as being somehow connected with wrong and its penal causations.

Now, the immense value of this impression can not be over-estimated. It connects all evil with its fit tokens of expression. The races all march down their way carrying their own dishonored flags. The families have their own disfigurements and scars. There is no concealment; every thing is out in visible shape, and is going to be. We could never have any just opinion of moral retribution as inexorably connected with moral conduct, unless these galleries, down which we go, were hung with just so many unsightly figures and objects of disgust. Sin will get fit discipline here only as it occupies the house it builds, looking on the forms it paints and catching in the air the scent of its own low practice. When we con over, indeed, the malformations and disfigured shapes that are crowding about us here in such multitude, and confronting in such libelous airs the beauty of the Creator, we seem, at times, to have somehow missed our world; and yet there is all the beauty here there can be, and all there ought to be, unless there can be more of worth and less of wrong. If the house we live in humiliates our feeling, it does not sink us below the scale of our merit.

A second moral advantage of the unbeautiful and often disgustful things of the world is closely related, and yet radically different; I speak of the representational office they are designed to fill. We fall into a great mistake when we assume that nature and natural objects must represent the thoughts only and resources of the Creator. It may have been, nay, certainly was his purpose in them, that man should be represented to himself; or, what is the same thing, supplied with images to express his sentiments and thoughts. Language is a first necessary of existence, and everyone who knows what language is finds it bedded in physical types and images naturally significant, and prepared before-hand—even before they are vocally named—to express, by their figurative power, mental thoughts and ideas. And these being vocally named, no matter by what sound, become words that recall so many figures, and carry so many different kinds of expression. The physical heaven is height, purity, and order, and so the figure *heaven* signifies the state of the blessed. Ground is the prostrate, underfoot element, a figure thus to signify *humility* [*humus*]. Integers are wholes, hence *integrity*. All the words we get for the uses of mind and the expression of moral ideas are figures brought up thus out of nature, and made to be the staple of our language And this is possible, simply because the objects of nature are relationally, or representationally, made; contrived, that is, to represent our thoughts and help us figure ourselves to ourselves and to one another.

At this point we strike the question, what if there were no base, unbeautiful or disgustful things in the world; what if every image were an image of God's beauty unmarred, every object cast in the molds of ideal order and unblemished life? Of course there is no language now to represent or figure wrong, bad character, vice, moral obliquity, or corruption; all because there is no representational matter, out of which figures to carry a bad impression can be drawn. Our language is good enough for all but the moral uses of our life, but here it is utterly wanting. And what benefit can we get in living, when we can not think, distinguish, express, or interpret, any single working of our disorder? The very thing now wanted, above every thing else, is a good supply of disfigurements, distortions, uncomely shapes, loathsomenesses, objects of aversion and disgust. Just all that differs the world now from what it would be, representing only God, is required for our sakes, to be the timber of a language that will serve our morally misshapen life, and permit us to think and talk of our condition as our truest good requires. Only so can we get such terms as these—*vile*, *unclean*, *corrupt*, *polluted*, *rotten*, *lame*, *distorted*, *crabbed*, *venomous*, *distempered*, *revolting*, *loathsome*, *depraved*, and five hundred others of the same class, all based in figures of deformity and disgust supplied by the unbeautiful things of nature. And any one can see that without these forms of language all the moral uses of life must fail. We should be scarcely more completely out of our element, if we were installed in some third heaven where we could not get bread for our bodies.

Thirdly, it is a great moral advantage of the unsightly things, that they put us endeavoring after improvements. Nature we say is rough and wild, valuable mainly as a good possibility given for the production of something better. And so, without scruple, we fall to work in ways of culture and amendment, to improve what the Creator's hand has left us. We expect to make finer growths, fewer points of deformity, and far better, more attractive sceneries. It is well. The very effort puts our thought climbing in all directions. Our aspirations, personal, moral, spiritual, are all put struggling up into a better key. We sigh for beauty more often, and wonder whither it has fled. It happens, too, not seldom, that our moral nature recoils accusingly upon itself when trying thus to improve the sterile sceneries, or the slow, cold fields we cultivate. It is also a fact most remarkable at this point, that while we are put down so very close upon deformity, and have so much really disgustful stuff crowded in upon us, we are yet allowed to create the very most perfect things we can conceive—to enlarge and new-pencil the flowers, to enrich and vary and make generous all the naturally niggard fruits, to build houses that are palaces of beauty and forms of geometrically perfect thought never before entered into landscape, to set fountains in play and cascades spilling from the rocks, to cover up, in short, by the garnishes of art, all the uncomely and coarse defects of nature. God has no jealousy of us in these things. He loves to put us trying to create some kind of beauty; for he knows that, in doing it, we must think it, which we can not do without running out our thought, in all directions, fast and far—far enough to cross over the boundaries of our great moral and responsible life, and the possible sceneries to be unfolded there. And so the very ambition we have to create and improve, and finish up a more attractive state, is a kind of physical endeavor that carries some most excellent effects.

A fourth moral advantage of the misshapen creatures and disgustful objects of the world is one not often suggested, and yet immensely significant, considered as belonging integrally to a completely furnished moral state; viz., the keeping under and due regulation of the fastidious spirit. All bad minds and all partly good are exposed to this kind of peril, and if it were not for the rough practical encounters we have with so many disgusts and so many coarse, unsightly things, mixing, in one way or another, with our very experience itself, we can hardly imagine to what pitch the vice would grow. As it is even now, under so many strong correctives constantly applied, it is a vice most widely prevalent, and destructive as widely to the finest generosities and highest possibilities of character. It is not the sin of little minds only playing with affectations of quality but it creeps into large, high natures, to make them little; for, when it has gotten firm hold even of such, they are not likely to be worth much afterward, as respects any of the heroic and beneficent virtues. Their prodigious delicacy eats up their sympathies, and so far unspheres them as to put them out of range, in all great works attempted for society. They can not dress a wound, or visit a hospital. The barefooted child asking bread in the street, ought to make a more presentable appearance. What right had a beggar last night to come and die at their gate. They would like to copy the Master in doing charities to the poor, but the bad air and the squalid appearances repel them. They would have more pleasure in the communion if it were more select. They do not like to be accosted as a brother, lest a little more relationship may be claimed than they are ready to allow. They apprehend some lack of delicacy in attempts to rescue a certain fallen portion of society. They are also greatly scandalized by demonstrations of piety that go beyond the conventional forms. And how can they be expected to get benefit from prayers and addresses that mistake their grammar. This weak, unreasoning, very unpractical vice creeps everywhere, and no specification can exhaust the forms of mischief it assumes. It is the vice of not doing, or rather of not quite liking any thing proposed to be done. We can not too much honor the beneficence of God, in the disgusts and disagreeable, distasteful-looking things by which he is all the while crowding us, if possible, out of our fastidiousness and the foolishness of our unpractical delicacy. Were it not for this, it is doubtful whether Christ himself could ever have gotten hold of personal respect enough to make good his evidences. Why should he do so many unrespectable things? Why did he give out his sympathies so freely to so many disgusting creatures? How could he hear unshocked Martha's speech at the grave of Lazarus? Nothing saves us from this mean-minded, foolish kind of criticism, but the fact that our every scheme of life is a drill to keep us off from it. And yet even now there is more great living, and grandly toned beneficence killed by this contemptible delicacy, than there is by the rough, hard fights of war. We do not commonly think of it as having any particular moral significance, and yet it poisons human brotherhood more perversely, in ways more wide of reason, than any other kind of sin. Indeed, if Christianity squarely confronts any particular point in the moral configuration of the world, it is exactly here. It comes into the world, we may almost say, as a good angel, to look after the disgusts of it, the lunatic ravings, the blind eyes, the halting limbs, the leprosies and sores, the publicans and harlots, and their much dishonored sorrows. This is the true moral beauty, and to this God is training us, by all the revulsions through which we are made to pass.

And so we are brought out, last of all, at the very point which makes the only sufficient and true conclusion of our subject; viz., the fact that what we call God's beauty is not anywise dishonored by the deformities and disgusts of nature, but is, after all, only perfectly and effectively expressed by means of them. When he gives away mere physical beauty, for a good and necessary end, his moral beauty is only displayed in that kind of sacrifice. To have his own works marred and scarred, stamped with ignominy, configured to the disgusts and obliquities of evil, was a most costly condescension, fitly to be called a sacrifice; for it was impossible that so great mental beauty should not cling to its own perfect forms, and long to look on the unsullied faces of its children—thinking regretfully of them even as he did of his Son, when he sighed: "his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men." Call it, therefore, sacrifice—even the creation itself—the sacrifice before the sacrifice; for how much real beauty, dear to God, is sunk in the grotesque and forbidding forms created! True, we call it still a beautiful world, though it is plainly enough a great way off from that—farther off to God than it can be to us.

What, then, shall we say—is God dishonored, or at all less honorable, that we find him presiding over so many uncouth shapes, and creatures so infected with airs of disgust? By no means. Exactly contrary to this, his most real, his gloriously sublime beauty could never have been seen, except under just these conditions. Just because it was so great a thing for the Creator to give up the beauty of things, and subject his whole vast product to adverse criticism—to let all the deformities, all the commonnesses, all the disgusts be installed in it—by this very sacrifice in things is his ineffable moral beauty revealed. At this point comes out the true glory of his fatherhood. He is willing to let even his great work fall with us, and take on the shows of our dishonors; for he means to have our moral ideas unfolded by them, and also to be with us and assist our struggles upward out of them. By so many abnegations and paternal condescensions is he proving out his greatness and beauty upon us. And the result is that, after we have begun, as in this article, to lay our criticism on the unsightly facts of the world, drawing our own conclusion that there is probably about as much blemish as beauty in things, we are brought round, at the close, to make our discovery, that God's real beauty—viz., that which is chiefest and highest above all, his moral beauty—is, after all, about us and upon us, and if we speak of blemish or stain, is practically infinite. So that our unbeautiful world is yet both symbol and pledge of God's infinite beauty. He suffers no subtraction thus, in the blemished things of his creation, but is raised in all highest majesty and greatness by them; let forth, we may even say, into the full-orbed moral effulgence of his character.

How important, also, this may be in its moral effect upon us will be readily seen. We inhabit, thus, a world where moral beauty is the chief beauty. I believe, too, that we commonly feel it to be so, apart from any such refinements as may seem to have been attempted in this article. We do not see the exact amount of beauty here that we think we have a right to look for, and yet there comes upon us somehow, apart from all fine-spun distinctions, an impression that our nobly great and Perfect Friend is with us, and that still the infinite beauty of good is in him. He hangs about us like a moral vision, certified to our feelings in spite of, or even by, just all the deformities of the world. And this vision, or impression, always welcome, is printing itself more and more deeply on us, every hour, by our scarcely conscious, yet fixed habit of reverence. We get accustomed, in this way, to thinking of moral beauty as the only sovereign distinction. And it is exactly this impression that we want; so that we may have our own great struggle consummated in it. All the moral uses of life, therefore, come to their point in this—in learning how to let go captivating things for such as are solid, in making sacrifices of things innocent for things beneficent, in ceasing to please ourselves that we may work out the fruit of our principles.

There is yet derivable from this whole subject, as now presented, a very simple inference in regard to the future that is too significant to be suppressed. When the present life is ended, and the grand consummation of its uses complete, the reasons that require so much of deformity and loathsomeness in the world will be discontinued, and the new state entered upon will be garnished, doubtless, by new forms and images that are without blemish—perfect in purity and beauty. Then, for the first time, will it be seen how largely the faces and sceneries and objects of our present world were marred by defect and disproportion. The dreary commonness of all these things will be a discovery; for the beauty of the new world will be so complete, we may believe, as to exclude even the lack of interest and expression, retouching all faces and forms in such manner as their perfect idealization requires.

In the same way it also follows that, going into a second state of probation hereafter, which many assume to be an authorized expectation, we must of course encounter there all the unbeautiful things, deformities, and loathsomenesses we encounter here, and probably as much worse and more frequent, as the key we start upon there is lower, by the whole unprofiting of a misspent life. All the reasons that require unsightly and disgustful things will still hold good, requiring the second state of trial also, to be insphered representationally by such kind of images and disfigurements as will most exactly tally with the qualities and characters insphered. Whether such a prospect is more agreeable than none atall, some persons will not readily decide.

XI.

OF PLAGUE AND PESTILENCE.

As certainly as God exists, maintaining a complete and perfect government over the world, all events have some definite use or meaning, which is the reason of their existence. They take place, not merely *by* causes but *for* causes; that is, for ends of intelligence and goodness—always for moral ends; for if we sometimes speak of physical ends in the Divine government, there will ever be some last end still beyond, wherein God has respect to the discipline of souls; that is, to character. That any thing physical can be a last end with God is quite unsupposable. At the same time, while plagues and pestilences are not more truly appointed for given ends or uses than other events, the place they fill in the grand economy of human existence is too important to allow the belief that they occur for any reasons but such as are of the greatest moment.

The figure they make in written history is not prominent, I know, when compared with the figure made by the wars of the race; and yet I am by no means certain that their effects on the race have been either less destructive to life, or, in a social and moral point of view, less important. The history of war is the history of exploit and passion, full of dramatic energy, and abounding in examples of heroic valor and scenes of tragic suffering. But pestilence is death without a history. It shows us men melting away in silence before the breath of an invisible destroyer. It is carnage without heroism. There is no leadership, no counsel, no exploit or victory. Death and burial, and death too fast for burial, cities pale with fear, streets where the dying pile upon the unburied dead, nations thinning away, helpless and panic-struck, beseeching heaven to spare, and offering hecatombs of children to appease their gods—these and such like are the material of pestilence. It is too painful for history. History shuns it, only raising a monument here and there, in some brief paragraph or section, just to perpetuate the memory of so great weakness, fear, and spiritual dispossession. But we must not think that, because the plagues and pestilences fill no large spaces in written history, their effects and consequences are only trivial. They represent the silence of God, which is more operative sometimes, moving on a vaster scale, and causing, it may be, greater desolations than the noisiest thunders and bloodiest commotions of human strife and battle. The rule of Providence is in them; and Providence does not require a history to give it name and effect; still it goes on, from age to age, doing its will upon all peoples and empires, working out, by silent campaigns of causes, results that, for scope and central depth of meaning, have a comparatively unmeasured and measureless consequence.

To merely recapitulate the great plagues or pestilences that have swept over the world, within the period of definite history, would be quite impossible in such an article as this. I will only instance a few, just to raise a degree of impression, where commonly almost no impression appears to exist. Thus, in A. D. 170, a terrible pestilence ravaged all Europe. In Rome alone, when at its height, it was estimated that the deaths were at least 10,000 a day. Again, the whole Roman Empire, from Egypt to Scotland, was swept over, in the same manner, by a pestilence that raged between A. D. 250 and 262. Gibbon says it was calculated that half the human race perished in that single pestilence. Passing over a great number of intervening plagues, another general pestilence was coursing back and forth, through Europe and the world, for a period of fifty-eight years, between A. D. 542 and A. D. 600, limited to no climate, no season of the year, no mode of communication, but coming and going at pleasure, with little respect either to means or remedies. Some cities were even left without an inhabitant. Passing over whole centuries again, that were marked by destructive plagues, we descend to the period between A. D. 1345 and 1350, when we trace a terrible pestilence, sometimes called the *black death*, extending from Eastern China to Ireland. In many cities, nine out of ten of the inhabitants perished. Some were entirely depopulated. In London, 50.000

of the dead were buried in one grave-yard. Venice lost 100,000 inhabitants, Lubec 90,000, Florence the same number. During the three years of the disease in Spain, it is affirmed that two-thirds of the people perished. Another general plague desolated Europe in 1665–7; Naples losing 240,000 out of 290,000 inhabitants, Genoa 80,000 out of 94,000. In London, 68,000 perished by the same disease, and the other great cities of Europe were visited scarcely less severely. Again, a terrible pestilence broke out and continued to rage between A. D. 1702 and 1711, which visited all Europe, and extended also to this country. Now, consider that, in this little calendar, I have named only a few of the great and general plagues on record; that, meantime, a certain regular band of contagious diseases, which seem to be inexhaustible and immortal, such as yellow fever, scarlet fever, small-pox, and the like, are marching ever round the world on their mission of death; and then, besides, that peculiar and strange outbreaks of malignant epidemic have meantime been desolating one or another part of the world—and you begin to conceive what rank must be assigned to pestilences in the grand economy of human existence. If, in the empire of China alone twenty-five millions of people were carried off by a single one of the plagues to which I have referred—a number greater, by many times, than perished in all the wars of Napoleon—if, by another, it is found that even the world itself is half depopulated, it can not be that God has not some end of the highest consequence to serve, by an instrumentality so tremendous. What, then, we ask, are the supposable ends and uses of God in the appointment of a discipline so appalling? I answer—

1. That they undoubtedly serve important uses as regards moral and social advancement, by the effects wrought in the physical economy of the race. Sin, running constantly down into ways of vice and depravity, produces a certain virus, or poison, in the physical stock of families. This morbid quality, or virus, accumulating for several generations, and working both a moral and physical debility in the subjects, continually aggravated by filthy habits of life and low supplies of food, it becomes necessary that some desolating disease be developed, which will purge the race of so much low or diseased blood, and prevent the infection from extending further. Accordingly, it is observed that all plagues and pestilences begin, as fermentations of death, in the lowest forms of society and character, and generally in the most degraded nations of the world. And so, notwithstanding sin working ever as a poison of death in the world, God manages, by occasional plagues or pestilences, breaking out just where and when they are wanted, to keep good the physical stock of the race, raising it even to a higher pitch of cultivation and of spiritual capacity, from one age to another. And without this kind of agency, exerted by occasional plagues or pestilent diseases, there is reason to fear that the stock of the race would become fatally infected and poisoned throughout; and so, human society, instead of rising, might

be ever descending to a feebler type of manhood and a meaner capacity of character.

2. Great pestilences appear to be needed in order to sustain the reality or keep alive in the race efficient impressions of God. For it is humiliating, that the proof of God which most avails with mankind is not that which is offered to our intelligence, but that which meets our conscience and our fears. It is so, partly because we are under so great intellectual and moral blindness—so unreflecting and careless of things invisible; principally because we do not seem really to be *met*, if I may use that figure, by those gifts of undeserved favor and blessing which are dispensed in connection with a plan of redemptive mercy. Indeed there are certain incidental defects, if I may so call them, in any such plan of mercy, which could hardly be avoided, and which render it liable, so far, to the encouragement of atheism. For, in order to be impressed by the sense of God in the events of life, we must feel a conviction that they have a meaning and a relation to ends of high significance. But this we shall not feel unless they seem exactly to meet something in our own desert, or want, or character. Accordingly it will be found, that men who have no sense of God, or of final causes, in the common events and mercies of life—because mercies meet no conscious feeling of desert in transgression—or who even deride the suggestion that God has any definite end or use in such events, will immediately give in to the contrary conviction, when some terrible visitation of calamity

appears. All because there is a certain correspondence felt between such tremendous judgments and their own convictions of desert. Now the religious instinct is moved. This, they will cry, is God; the just anger of God or the gods. The sacrifices are multiplied, the solemn processions are made, the fasts are proclaimed, and when the destroyer rages fiercely they will rush into the temples in panic-stricken crowds, tearing their hair, falling on their faces, and beseeching God or the gods, in distressful outcries, to turn away their anger.

Every great pestilence is in this view a much needed apostle of religion. And if such visitations did not occur, at intervals, there is reason to suspect that a plan of mercy would of itself encourage atheism, or obliterate the sense of moral government—by reason of the fact, that a perpetual run of undeserved mercies would bring no sense of fitness, therefore none of a God distributing events by laws of fitness. It is necessary, therefore, that God should open, now and then, the gates of terror, and march out on the guilty fears of the race. Then, how real is God! how true and just are his judgments! how sober a thing is life! how momentous an interest is religion!

3. It is another use of great pestilences, that they yield us a conviction so intense of the moral debility and degradation of sin. In the exploits of war you might even forget, sometimes, that men are not gods themselves, by reason of the magnanimous spirit displayed and the heroic scenes transacted. But when

you see them under a pestilence, they appear to be the tamest and most unmagnanimous of beings.

Though it is well understood, at such times, that certain indulgences, whether of vice or vicious appetite, are connected with danger, still, as if to prove the intense sensuality of their nature, how many will steal on after appetite, cheated of all reasonable self-control and discretion, till the fatal limit is passed. And then, the moment any symptom of the disease is felt, they will give way to a tempest of fear, which overturns all equanimity and offers them to the death, half dead already. There will be noble examples of charity and manly courage in such scenes; but oftener, and especially if the pestilence becomes exceedingly violent and fatal, it will be aggravated and rendered tenfold more fatal by a gratuitous panic, in which spirit, confidence, and self possession, are all quite taken away. And if the disease rages a great length of time, it will generally be seen, too, that selfishness, in its pure meanness and degradation, is about the only residuum of character left. The well will flee from the sick and dying —friend from friend. The dead will be left unburied; children will desert their dying parents; fathers and mothers flee, in consternation and superstitious horror, from their children; and it will seem that every thing has given way that belongs to the dignity of the human creature, leaving only a herd of sheep in the forms of men, without the innocence that makes even that spiritless animal respectable.

There is sometimes revealed a stage of depravity beyond even this, when, through a protracted despair of life, the state of panic has passed into that of horror and wildness. Such was the plague of Athens, as described by Thucydides. The people of Attica had been driven into the city, and there they were besieged by their enemies. The plague fell among them under the siege, and they began to die with continually increasing frequency, till, at last, burial was forgotten or impossible. The dead were piled in circles about the fountains, where they crept to slake their insupportable thirst. Panic soon changed into horror, the people grew wild and desperate, all the bonds of feeling and duty gave way. Brutal crimes and licentious pleasures, justified by sneers at the impotence of the gods, and by the argument that nothing better was left, became the spirit of society itself, and the city appeared to be rather a city of fiends than of men.

And so it will always be found, though not always in the same degree, that man or the human race never appears to be so weak, unrespectable and base, as when some dreadful pestilence displays the true unrestrained view of their character. Is it no purpose of God, in the permission of plague and pestilence, to give us a revelation so painfully instructive and so mortifying to our self-respect?

4. While the less instructed and more paganized souls are likely to be affected in the manner just described, it will be quite otherwise with such as have been trained to juster impressions of God. These will be thinking rather of the great ends of beneficent dis-

cipline, for which their chastisement is sent, and are likely so to be more softened by it. They will not forthwith break loose in some outcry of superstition, at such times, in the manner of certain Christian preachers, testifying of God's judgments now come, in the sense that God's judgments have their meaning only in destructions; but they will be thinking of a terribly good meaning in them, which ought to bow them in repentances. Thus, when it was given to David to choose between famine, captivity, and pestilence, he made choice of the latter, because it was better to fall into the hands of the Lord, and not into the hands of men. Famine is generally from man, or by man's fault. Captivity is from man. But the pestilence that walketh in darkness, or cometh in mystery, is God's messenger, and represents the hand of the Lord—that very strong, sometimes awful, always good hand. No people can by any sort of inquest trace its birth, or lay open its causes. But they can all say that it cometh out from God, and bowing under it with unquestioning homage and trust, they are likely to be corrected and won by his appalling discipline, as they would not be by a more unbroken flow of his favors. When such judgments of his are abroad in the lands, they will, at least some of them, learn righteousness.

True, it may be said that men die at other times, and that, if no pestilence came, we all should die. But when we only fall away one by one, in regular order, then it is in our habitual atheism to say that there is a cause for this, and not see any longer that it is for a cause. It is the ordinary way of things, we say; it is the law of nature that lives should reach their limit. But when some giant death marches round through cities and kingdoms, and over lakes and rivers, mowing down whole populations before their time, we think of something back of nature, and higher. We are admonished of God, and there falls upon us a sobered feeling that even passes into a character, and becomes fixed in the deepest associations of our life. Thus whoever, at this far-off day, thinks of the plague of Athens or of London, thinks of God as a tremendous being, and of man as chaff before him. On æsthetic principles, God is a different being to the world because of his judgments—mysterious, fearful, sovereign, and, in goodness, awfully good. We are set in a different temperament before him and his truth—to be more modest and sober, more teachable, more readily convinced, less captious in our doubts as we are less bold in feeling.

5. It is a most important use of great pestilences that they enforce, with an energy so terrible, the conviction of the unity of the race, and especially that they compel the higher and more privileged ranks of mankind to own their oneness of life with the humbler and more degraded or even savage classes. It is a most remarkable fact that, as the Asiatic cholera, so called, took its birth in the remote East, among a most degraded and decayed family of the race, so all the great pestilences of history—black death, glandular plague, small-pox, and other like visitations of God that have extended over the world—had their rise in China, Egypt, Africa,

or among some other people of the globe, run down by heathenism and its vices. Here, among the ruins of sin, where the race has been reduced in quality by a long course of physical and moral corruption—by savage passions, by indolence, filth, falsehood, oppression, fear and licentiousness—just here, I say, when we are beginning to doubt whether a type of humanity so low can be properly called human, there is generated the virus of some death that is to desolate the whole world. First, we hear of it in the distance of a half circumference of the globe; then that it is marching on through kingdom after kingdom, till, finally, it reaches the highest points of civilization, filling cities and palaces with death and terror. It returns too, probably, again and again, in its circuit of woe, as if it were sent of God to unpeople the world.

And so the highest ranks of character and cultivation are seen to be one family with barbarians and savages; dying like sheep from one age to another, under the ignoble diseases they generate. We can not escape the dark fraternity of woe in which they claim us, for there is no other and separate world to which we can retire. We are shut up with them to breathe the miasma of their sins, and die with such kind of deaths as they may propagate.

Thus, also, we ought to die. It is right. For if we visit them not in the brotherhood of light and love, to raise them up into newness of life, then let them visit us, by a fixed law of social unity, and pour the virus of their degradation upon us, in cholera, black death, or plague—in whatsoever form God may appoint. This terrible brotherhood, this oneness of organic order and fate signified by the word *humanity!*—what an appeal does it make to us for the gospeling of these barbarous and decayed nations. It is China, Asia, Egypt, Africa —one dark region or another—sending out its messenger of pestilence to assert the old affinities of blood, and lay the awful demands of brotherhood and mercy at our door! When we deny the fraternity claimed, and our children, fathers, brothers and wives die for it in our houses, we follow them out to their graves, confessing by our tears that our community of life with the diseased nations of sin is, alas! too fearfully proved. And so each plague and giant death that stalks across the world, is really sent forth as a tremendous call for mercy and light wanted in some dark realm far away. One speaks for China, another for middle Asia, another for Africa, or the islands of the Indian Archipelago; and so they will continue to speak, until their terrible call is heard and the plagues of their degraded life are healed. Meanwhile it is also to be noticed that, when any kind of plague or malignant disease, passing round its deadly circuit, makes a beginning in any given nation or city, the first notice had of it will almost always be among the lowest and most depressed ranks of the people. If there be any spot, or community, or corner, where vice has its orgies, and where, under want and filth and sin, the wretched, half-diseased members of society congregate; if living in such a way for generations has brought down even the native tone of the stock and produced a people gangrened, so to speak, in the birth; just there the new plague, whatever it be, will be attracted, and they will receive it as tinder receives the fire. And there it will gradually spread and rise in its range, till habits of temperance and virtue cease to have any power against it. As it was in the plague of Athens, which appeared first among the sailors congregated in the Piræus, so it has been with almost every plague, in its first appearance, at any place or in any city.

And thus, again, we have it brought yet closer to us, that we live in the real brotherhood of all corruption, and no pitch of rank or wall of caste can separate us from its woes. When it takes a pestilence and has nursed it into power, it is for us! As fashions go downward, diseases and plagues go upward; one simply preparing shapes for the body, but the other, by a more awful prerogative, the disease by which, under fashion or without, it shall die. What an argument, again, is this, requiring us to become the guardians and ministers of love to the children of want and degradation around us. For if we do not raise them up out of vice and dejection by the Christian means we apply, they will bring in woes and deaths upon our children, the infection of which ages can not expend or expel.

Once more: there is a great moral benefit to accrue from the dispensation of plague and pestilence, in the evidence, thence to be revealed, of the remarkable sanative power of Christianity. If we had no seats of vice, no degraded and abject classes, run down by idleness, want, uncleanly and vicious habit, the propagations of plague would almost certainly come to their limit in a very short time. No such plague, for example, as the Asiatic cholera, has ever been able to get any strong hold, or rage with any great violence, among the New England people. They have such habits of industry, a condition of life so plentiful and healthful, so much of physical tone, and so little withal of that superstition which is the soul of all panic, that the infections of pestilence meet a barrier, when they arrive, that is very nearly impassable. Besides, it is a fact most remarkable, that the virus of no desolating plague is known ever to have originated among a Christian people. In the propagations of causes, all evil runs from bad to worse by a fixed law, and there is no self-remedial function in mere nature that will ever stay the process. Things will go on, as in a disordered machine, the very motion of which aggravates the disorder, till it is finally quite threshed to pieces and brought to a stand. And in much the same way the pestilences of the world appear to generate the virus of their death in what may be called the last run, or the lowest run, of their disordered causes. When some people is fairly rotted down by low living, or filthy and base habit, they generate, finally, a plague-infection that poisons the world. Hence there appear to be no Christian plagues, because no Christian people can ever sink to a type of moral and physical dejection low enough to breed them. They will have too much of character, condition, good keeping, courage superior to panic—too much antidote, in a word, to allow the distilling of any such poison. Is it idle to suggest, or foolish to believe that Christianity, as a grace of remedy in the world, has a supernatural touch, that sends a qualifying counter-shock through the bad causes of nature, and prevents the plague-mischief being fully concocted? Is there no healing virtue going out of the hem of its garment, which is entered, supernaturally, into the run of the bad causes, to divert, or turn them off, from their otherwise natural consummation?

However this may be, Christianity, as a matter of fact, is seen to hold a position of antagonism to plague and pestilence, that gives it a remarkable supereminence above all the false religions of heathenism. It has antiseptic properties, which prove both its origin and its value. We see what it can do in the fact that plague, the lowest fermentation of sin, is averted, or at least decisively counteracted by it. So much of health, or healing, goes with the reconciliation or regenerated harmony it proposes to work in the mind. By such tokens it puts us in courage to believe that all worst forms of debility and moral degradation will finally be removed, and a new type of energy and power developed in the race. Seeing what our gospel can do, as against plague and pestilence, we are strengthened, in fact, by plague and pestilence, as we could not be by its more indefinite ministries and helps in the ordinary forms of disease. We anticipate under it a day of health and robust life, in which great things will be done and higher inspirations of genius revealed. Population will be multiplied and grow dense without danger, society will receive more impulse, and all the conditions of existence will be raised. Toward this grand consummation our gospel is piloting all the poor diseased nations. What it has done, and is seen to be doing, is the token, as well as proof, that the healing it has undertaken it will be able also to perform. The sublime picture of prophecy it will so fulfill, becoming a river of life, covered on the banks with trees of life, whose leaves are the healing of the nations. The great plagues and pestilences are ended and gone. Ministers of wrath, as being ministers of good, they are wanted no more, and there is no more curse.

XII.

OF INSANITY.

The subject of insanity is by no means fresh or inviting. But since the fact itself is the darkest of all dark things in the catalogue of the world's suffering allotments, I do not feel at liberty to decline it. Enough is said of it, but not all that most needs to be said. The topic is in the hospitals and the courts—expounded and re-expounded—handled pathologically, therapeutically, statistically, philanthropically, and, so far, exhaustively. All the natural phases and conditions appear to be fully explored. And yet there is a particular point in the higher relations of the subject which I do not remember ever to have seen referred to. I mean the strong anti-moral look it seems to carry; presenting facts that, as far as they go, appear to be almost unreducible to the supposition of a moral purpose, or even to cloud the more general confidence of a moral government concerned in the rougher allotments of life. I do not feel obliged, of course, to surrender to this kind of impression. I even hope to throw some partial light upon the question, such as I believe the case permits. The frowning anti-moral aspects it presents are these:—

1. That it is not as distinctly retributive on the subjects as we should naturally expect where there is a treatment so terribly severe; being often hereditary, often a calamity befalling the most saintly persons, invading often the most amiable dispositions, and not seldom associating impressions of some wild possession by evil spirits, of whose presence and agency we scarce know what to make.

2. That it puts a full stop always to the uses of the moral life, causing the subject to exist in a way that cuts off the benefits of existence, and forbidding him thenceforward any possibility of improvement, in that which was the principal and almost only errand of his mission as a human creature. He can not even do such a thing as duty, of which, perhaps, he sometimes fondly talks.

3. Almost nothing can be learned by others from his vagaries. Being out of the moral life, there is no moral lesson to be drawn from his discourse or his action.

4. Where there is a recovery and even complete restoration, the whole space covered by the interregnum of the insanity is a blank; so that he can get back nothing to remember from it, but can only start again, at the point where his reason left him. He has lost so much, grown old by just so many months or years, and gets no compensation. Probably he has lost what stood him in much higher consequence, the confidence of his nature in itself; for returning now to himself, he returns to a self that has been shattered, always to be

weakened and oppressed by misgivings that discourage the assurances, if they do not unsettle the equilibrium, of his moral character itself.

5. Where there is no recovery, the life was practically ended from the day when the empire of reason was broken; after that he passes just so many years of time, as one of the dead unburied; talking, suffering, wrestling with his enemy, yet practically dead; getting nothing of life for himself, and communicating nothing to others, save the cares and claims of pity he lays upon them.

In all these points the moral possibilities of the subject appear to be sadly crippled, and we do not see, at once, the uses by which so great a loss may be compensated. I recollect no other case in the whole contour of our human experience, where a suspicion can be so naturally taken up, that the moral ends of life are forgot. If chance, or fate, or what some call nature, were the supreme arbiter in events, we might look to see just such gaps of rule without reason or a true moral end; but that a supreme intelligence, disposing all things in the interest of character, should so often break down even the chances and capacities of character is a perplexing discovery. What, then, shall we say? Is it so, or is it not? Can we bring the question to a point that affords some partial relief to our perplexity? Almost all dark things in our human allotments are cleared by a careful explanation of their moral ends and offices. The daylight of the world is in its adjustments for character. Whether it be so here, in this ill-looking subject, we are now to inquire.

And, first of all, we shall find, recurring to that point and scanning it more closely, that cases of insanity are much more frequently retributive than our very tender pity at first allowed us to perceive.

Three great vices, one or all, carry this dreadful penalty, in examples that are numerous and easily to be traced. (1) The vice of intemperate drink, which maddens first the body, and then, as by necessary consequence, the mind; producing either delirium or idiocy, or a state of uncontrollable exasperation. (2) The vice of general and excessive over-eating, breeding disorder and finally distress in all the digestive functions, and producing states of grim depression, hypochondriac torments and nervous horrors, that drive more patients to the hospital than even the vice of drink—all very correct, blameless people, as we say, whose misfortune we pity, but can nowise explain. Few persons conceive the amount of constitutional and mental wreck produced by this habitual overloading of nature, restrained by no terms of prudence and self-observation. And, when the catastrophe comes, the wonder is that a nature so robust has crumbled into madness without any assignable cause! (3) The vice of over-doing. We call it sometimes our American vice. The nature is put under a heavy pressure of instigation, and driven up to the limits of possibility, year upon year; spelled by no relaxations, freshened by no play of society, and scarcely permitted the necessary respite of sleep. Life goes on like a storm that never lulls, and the powers are so relentlessly driven, that they are seldom gathered up into consciousness and self-recollection. The brain itself becomes a driving engine, that never slacks the whirl of its impulsions. It is as if the man were all momentum and nothing else. What wonder then is it, if the powers never gathered up, the brain always whirling, the momentum no longer possible to be stopped, hurl aside, finally, the mastery of self-government by which they have never been really mastered, and the whole mental incontinence flies to wild insanity. Whether the wreck is partly physical or not, at first, is a matter of no consequence. The result we deplore as calamity, and the cause we call imprudence. It is vice, it is crime; no such rank abuse of nature is possible without crime, and the eternal laws of retribution forbid that any man be so long drunk with excess, and escape the consummation of a state of madness.

Besides these three more general and widely-sown vices, and the crops of insanities they propagate, we have abundance of smaller ones doing what they can to extend the harvest. Thus how many live on affectations and contrived seemings of principle and character, till they lose the distinctions of reality, and are landed in complete insanity! Excesses and fierce tempests of passion—how often do they burn out the natural colligations of reason, leaving only fumes and vagaries, and frenzied exasperations. What is avarice but a vice that runs to miserhood? and what is that but insanity? Impure habits rot the brain of how many victims? Idleness unyokes all the judgments, lets fly all the vagrant uncollected powers, and finally, as age advances, breeds a state of nonentity that can not hold opinions, or a hair-brained, addled state that opinions can not hold. Rash adventures pitch how many headlong down the gulf of insanity? Conceit is next thing to insanity at the beginning, and is how very often identical with it at the close. Glancing over these and a hundred other sporadic vices of character that could be named, we see how many causes making suit to retribution against the continuance of reason. Though we were at first so ready to conclude that insanities are not, or almost never, retributive, we distinctly perceive that they are so in a very large proportion of the examples. It is even difficult to believe that a good many cases of religious insanity are not connected with some kind of mal-practice, or perhaps with some moodiness of temper, that is really perverse; though they are many times due, no doubt, to causes previously at work in the nature itself, possibly to such as are, in a sense, hereditary. Diseases in general are commonly supposed to have their root in moral causes and their bad implications; in that sense to be the common heritage of the race. Thus certain particular diseases, such as deafness, blindness, consumption, are supposed to be hereditary in certain particular families; and many have as little difficulty in saying that the same is true of insanity. It may be so in appearance; but that any death of faculty, so immeasurably deep and horrible to think of, is let down upon a human creature by mere physical derivation, and without any blame in himself, is too shocking to be allowed, without some partial and collateral explanation that will ease the severity of the statement. Such things must be left to the future; and it must suffice, for the present, that we distinguish so clearly, on so wide a scale, the retributive connection of our insanities with our self-abusing crimes and vices. On the whole it is even a fair subject of wonder, that so large a portion of mankind, driven by so many excesses, tossed by so many tempests of unreason, sunk so deep in wrong, eaten by so many acrid humors, battered by so many abuses of faculty, get through life without being hopelessly insane. No kind of machine was ever kept running for so long a time in a state of general disorder, without being threshed into wreck by its own motions.

Consider, secondly, the moral intent, and what must be the ultimate moral effects, of this clearly discoverable connection between the insanities of the world and its self-abusing practices. Calling it a "clearly discoverable connection," as in many cases it most certainly is, the remarkable thing appears to be that it is so very generally undiscovered. Unless we have put our minds to the question, we have scarcely taken up any impression of the fact; and very few persons, who have occasionally noted examples of the kind, have any conception at all of the tremendous reactions by which the wrongs and excesses of men are battering and tearing asunder the integrity of their rational nature.

Therefore, some may ask, what moral benefit can there be in a kind of retribution, or retributive action, that almost nobody observes? To which it is a good and sufficient answer, that a great many kinds of moral benefit, and such as are of the very highest consequence, come late, and require long and heavy discipline to start the sense and beget the want of them. We have heard how many thousand lectures on the uses of ventilation, and the necessities of wholesome air? They began late, after millions had died for the want of it; and yet, even now, what multitudes have no conception that air is any thing! Probably a thousand years are wanted still to get the world apprised of the fact that breathing requires something to breathe! Lessons that come by self-observation and reflection come still later and more slowly. How many thousand years of dyspepsia did it take to get the sense of it fixedly enough to find a word for it? a word it was to be that is itself borrowed, in its composition, from a language already dead. And now that we have it, how many suffering invalids that have the genuine matter of it in their bodies—nay, in their minds beside—do we hear every day thanking God that they still have an excellent appetite left them! Everybody knows that a ship works heavily having too much cargo; but our poor life-function has to groan long ages for excess of cargo, before anybody guesses what the groaning is for. So when minds wade deep in troubles, wondering why there must be so many troublesome and perverse people, the discovery comes, how late, that what they suffer is all of themselves and their miserably oppressed bodies; and to many it will never come at all! Probably enough, some of David's enemies were not in Saul's camp, nor in his own court, nor even in his bad son Absalom; but in his own tired, overworked, unsleeping brain. Others, again, are overhung, whole months and years, with a dreadfully oppressive gloom—financial, political, or religious—never at all to know that this gloom is in their liver, and that in black discouragement from their self-indulgence. All these and a thousand such like pathologic matters, are abundantly described, or expounded, and we have a good right to know them. We do have a little more sense of them than the more ancient people had, and, probably enough, the people of the hundredth generation after us will get to be so well aware of what their moods and moodinesses mean, as to rectify, or skillfully keep away, all such kinds of torment. And so, the late-coming lessons insanity is to bring will finally come, dispensing their intended moral benefit.

There are, then, be it observed, two great departments of the moral life; one of which includes the wrongs men do against each other, and a second that includes the wrongs they do against themselves. The former kind press into recognition at once, and awaken prompt sensibility, because the subjects of the wrongs cry out themselves, demanding redress, and making the very air tingle with their complaint. But the wrongs men do against themselves start no outcry, the wrong-doer is the victim, and the victim calls for no arraign ment or redress. Probably the wrongs men do against themselves are twenty fold, or possibly even a thousand-fold greater in amount of damage than the wrongs they do against each other; and yet they very seldom think of them as being any wrong atall. They very generally are not conscious of them; and when they are, they think of them as being only indiscretions, imprudences, excesses such as they have a good right to indulge, since they injure nobody but themselves; and which, therefore, they only regret or chastise a little with their tongue, but do not really blame as morally criminal. Now, the other class of crimes we can not miss the sense of, because they come back to be seen, or heard from, without our asking; but these latter come only by reflection, and men as we have just been saying, are exceedingly slow to reflect. They see what is about them and before their eyes, but how to turn their soul-eye back on themselves, and see what they are to themselves or against themselves, is almost never done till a certain reflective habit is formed, and commonly not, to any but a very small extent, till a reflective habit gets possession of society itself.

We have, then, here, in this fearful woe of insanity, a great retributive law that is waiting and working for the time when a more reflective habit shall arrive. And then it is going to fasten men's minds to the crimes they commit against themselves, making them felt as crimes in their real turpitude. And when it is done, a vast major department of the moral life will be voiced for command, in a complete set of moral convictions hitherto scarcely recognized. Now, for the first time self-government, temperance of feeling and action, a genuine right keeping of life, and a religiously close ordering of it that suffers no excess or abuse of faculty, will beget a more sound state of body and mind, and prepare a higher form of virtue, that is health itself. In the other department of the moral life, public justice and the bad repute of all wrong-doing are the argument for duty. Here the argument is the tremendous institute of insanity, visiting the silent wrongs men do against themselves, with its inevitable, terribly avenging penalties. In this second stage, and broader form of virtue, it will be understood as a first principle that, if we are to keep our reason, our reason must keep us. We shall consider well our faculties, what they are for, what they want, what they can do and bear, and what they cannot; and we shall have a conscience that will cover the whole ground of our actions toward ourselves; withholding us from all excesses of overdoing and self-indulgence as from suicide itself. Temperance, sobriety of feeling and passion, self-regulation at all points, will take the rank of duties, and their violation will be considered as great a crime against God, as frauds and deeds of blood against our fellow-men. And this conviction will strengthen our practical morality all round, enlarge our practical wisdom, rectify our spasmodic overdoing, raise our family stock itself in vigor, and settle us in a manly and rational way of happiness. The serenities will be many and the insanities few, and whatever belongs to character will have a way of firmness far aloof from all the nervous horrors.

Again, thirdly, it is one of the great moral uses of insanity that we are so powerfully admonished by it never to surrender our self-keeping to any kind of impulse or dominating sway, outside of our own personality or self-active liberty. For it is a great and radical distinction of moral natures, that they are to steer themselves by their own helm, and be responsible for what they may thus become—mere animals and things having no such high prerogative, and no capacity to be, different from what they are made to be, under the sway of causes not in themselves. Just here, accordingly, we discover a principal reason for that proneness to insanity, which is the infirmity of men in distinction from the animals. It is that, as being in evil or sin, they so far and frequently surrender themselves to impulsions or enchantments outside of their own responsible self-keeping. The power that was given them to gather up their nature in due self-colligation, and centralize it in the supreme domination of reason, is weakened, and they fly asunder, so to speak, in a scattering, unkept habit, that approaches, and finally becomes, insanity. They fall under a kind of possession, and are just so far dispossessed of themselves. In their zeal to get possession of money, money gets possession of them, driving them on past all bounds of reason, as if it were a demon. Instead of possessing their business, their business possesses them, shoving them on to all utmost overdoing, and finally to madness. Society possesses them, and so completely dominates in their habit, that any coming short of its conventionalisms or fashions goads them to distraction; their own self-keeping force is so far taken away, that their judgments themselves are reduced to a kind of insanity. They get possessed by other men in the same manner; one by some other that he thinks a hero or a genius; one by the name and successes of a great operator in the market; one by the fascinating airs and gayeties of a libertine; one by a charlatan or a quack; and another by a false prophet. Every soul in evil is under some kind of bad instigation or possession, that comes upon him as a gale of impulsion, swaying his objects and actions, and so far abating in him the sovereign keeping of his own right reason.

How far we are subject, in this manner, to the possession of foul spirits, and how far they are concerned in cases of insanity it may be difficult to say. Any thing is a possession that dispossesses the man of himself, from whatever world it comes. In this respect, the supposition of a possession by evil spirits is only an extension of the bad liability we incur under the other kinds of possession just named. We know that there are bad spirits, and it may be that they are no way separable from association with us, save by the fences of character. It does not follow that every sinister influence they communicate will make the subject insane, any more than that the other kinds of bad inspiration from the world and society will do it. Perhaps the foul possession will reach the state of complete insanity, only when it has been harbored long enough to get the soul decentralized, as we see in the other cases of excess and self-abuse referred to. On this subject of possession by evil spirits we have little or no direct knowledge of our own, but we have these three kinds of evidence that go a certain way, and are perhaps sufficient. (1) The scripture account of demons and their expulsion, where however, the language of description appears, in one or two cases, to indicate the impression that they are only cases of disease. Still, the scripture cases are so many and so dramatically given, and there is, withal, a reason so profound, just now, for a state of commotion among all powers of darkness, that they can hardly be reduced to any such construction. (2) The fact that so many cases of insanity, coming to our knowledge, have a demoniacal air and manner; the subjects talking as demons, calling themselves demons, and acting in a style of frenzy so unhumanly foul and malign. (3) The professed discoveries of magnetism, where one will is believed to subject another to its absolute sway, even across wide spaces of distance; and especially the revelations of necromancy, where one being, called a medium, offers himself to be played upon by whatever spirit, foul or fair, will come to possess him for its oracle—which oracle, it is admitted, will often be the utterance of a lying instigation. I know nothing of these matters save by report; I only perceive that they are making the world familiar with demoniacal possessions now, exactly answering to those of the scriptures, only under a different name. Instead of being laid, the bad spirits are now evoked; for the medium is a person offered to be possessed, and if the pretenses are true, actually getting possessed—all the parties engaged running down morally, as their habit of deference to the bad invisible powers weakens their moral and responsible selfhood, till finally they are landed, one after another, in a morally dejected profligacy which is real insanity.

We are brought out, thus, in the conclusion, that every human creature is in the way to insanity who allows himself to be possessed by any kind of impulsion, outside of his own responsible self-keeping. The weakening of the moral nature puts the very bond in jeopardy that is to hold the mind together, and keep it in the order of reason. Any kind of possession has this danger, this hideous form of peril, connected with it. And when the insanity is fully completed in a state of total dispossession, an equally complete and even terrific warning is given, to every man who will maintain his reason, that he beware of any least surrender which displaces the moral sovereignty of the soul, in the government of its own ways and actions. The great institute of insanity is partly designed, no doubt, to yield this kind of moral benefit. It may be that the very cases of insanity that we are wont to call hereditary are so only in the sense that it is a family weakness to be overdriven, or possessed by engagements and objects that might be well enough shaken off, but are finally allowed to break the mind's integrity.

Fourthly, a due observation of the distinction be tween the state of sanity and that of insanity raises a conception of the beauty and dignity of the moral nature which ought to be impressive, and to yield the highest practical benefit. In this distinction we perceive what a human creature becomes—how wild, and weak, and helmless—when the capacity of responsible action is suspended. Before, he was in government, having thought, and memory, and will, and passion, all bound up in terms of personal unity and self-acting responsibility. Now, he is a sad-looking wreck, an object of forlornest pity, not because the faculties thus named are gone, but because the moral sovereignty or supreme moral nature that held them in right order is fallen off its throne. They are nearly the same men that they were before, only minus in that supremely great something, which puts them in obligation, or makes them capable of it. This one summit faculty gone, how different are they become! We define their insanity itself, by saying that they are not any longer responsible, or capable of being responsible, for their actions; paying thus a tribute how grand to the supreme dignity of the moral nature! We sometimes state the definition of their loss in a different manner, by saying that they have lost their reason. But we mean by this, if we understand ourselves, their moral reason. They understand causes, and do acts of causation correctly. They frame propositions that connect subject and predicate, in as good logic as ever. They reason correctly in the sense of drawing conclusions out of premises. But they fail, it s said, in the right perception of premises; which term "right perception" means such kind of perception as co-ordinates things in the scale of right, and holds them in their fit signification, as related to the practical working of the moral life. What Kant calls the Practical Reason, by which he means very nearly the same thing as the moral sense, or morally sensing power of things and actions, is dislodged or broken.

And we can see at a glance why it ought to be this power, this moral nature, that goes in the breakage of insanity. For whatever be its immediate cause in a particular case, it comes, in the large view, as one of the damages of evil, and evil is evil as having the total stress of its wars against the moral nature. We have on hand thus all the activities, or active functions and faculties, working in full play; only the supreme moral self-dominion is gone, the power that colligates all the other faculties in terms of order and responsible action. Without this we are maniacs; with it, men. And what a lesson of respect and homage do we thus receive for our simple moral nature—super-eminent, balanced in the poles of law, self-regulative, regulative toward all order and perfection, that which makes a man a man. Sometimes we do not like to hear of this moral nature, we have low bad thoughts concerning it, a prejudice or even a kind of animosity against it, and prefer to see men go by other parts and powers that overtop, we think, this kind of magistracy. And yet, when we come to the using of a man who is out of his responsibility, we can do nothing with him, make nothing of him, hope nothing for him; he is a gas, a chimney smoke in the wind, a combustible blazing in the fire, and no more. Or, if we gather up all his fine faculties and parts, and go into careful computation of their value, we find them to be worth just nothing; and, if we still may use the personal pronoun of the poor bereft one, it will be only to say that he is become just nothing. If the world had no sun, we still might call it world, but it would be exceedingly difficult to find what it is. The moral nature is in like manner the sun of the soul, the gravitating center and light, and orbit-marking rule of all beside. All which we are given to see in convincing and most sad evidence, by these terrible, perhaps, we add, inscrutable insanities, that pluck the supreme orb, the moral nature, out of the soul's sky.

It may be that we do not consciously think all this when we fall upon a case of insanity, and yet we have it tacitly or implicitly in us. We miss that glorious something in the unhappy subject, which is a most dear something to us all. We turn away from God and duty still, it may be, and yet we feel that we carry a very great morally divine something with us, which it is a nearly total loss to lose. We have seen a fellow-nature broken down, despoiled of all capacity, by the loss of that benignant sovereignty, whose appointed office it is to conserve the soul's unity and order. Repelling this benignant sovereignty, which holds such orderly command, and keeps the mind conserved and centralized in such high consciousness before its throne, what do we but waive the rule of the keeper, and challenge a like discontinuance of reason? This kind of moral debate is silently raised how often in us all, when we go through the wards of a hospital, or encounter the maniac who was once our friend.

We come now, lastly, to a whole chapter of uses that are doubtless intended for us in this most terrible of all providential appointments, and which must, to a certain extent, accrue from it; though remaining to be more and more largely discovered in the future advancements and more complete developments of human character. These frequent exhibitions of insanity appear to be quite indispensable, as revelations carried to their extremity of something that is working more latently and gently in us all. We are not all insane, but we are in a kind of incipiency that must be recognized, if we are to exactly understand ourselves. We are not in perfect equilibrium and can not be, in evil, any more than the eye that has sand in it. Evil is against nature, and nature must accordingly receive a shock of at least incipient derangement from it. In this manner it results of necessity, not that we are insane, but short of perfect sanity, practically unsane. We do not understand the world and the working of the world's mind, save as we see it out of perfect balance, and working more or less disorderly. We do, in fact, complain that it is unregulated, or out of complete regulation—which is so far a state of unsanity—and we ought to have it as a much more fixed opinion, and more constantly remembered fact, than we do. We can not manage ourselves rightly, or act our part rightly toward the world, if we do not recognize the general unsanity in this manner.

Here, then, is the very great lesson we are to receive from so many examples of wreck and mental catastrophe, holding it in constant recollection, both in our management of ourselves, and our judgment of others. And there is no end to the uses to be made of it, for it covers the whole ground of our moral conduct, in all the infinitely diversified particulars that make up a wise and beautiful life. On the other hand, there is no end to the mischiefs, and miseries, and disfigurements, any one will suffer, who goes into life acting on a different assumption; viz., the assumption of his infallible, right-seeing sanity.

Thus we need, every one of us, to know that we live in moods and phases, working eccentrically, sometimes more unhinged and sometimes less; sometimes in better nature and sometimes irritable; sometimes more disposed to jealousy; sometimes more to conceit. Nothing looks fresh after a sleepless night; nothing true after an over-heavy dinner. A touch of dyspepsia makes the soul barren and every thing else barren to it—even the finest poem it turns to a desert. Any mood of gloom, in the same manner, hangs a pall over the sun, and even the very bones will sometimes seem to be in that mood as truly as the eyes. Opinion is sometimes bilious, sensibility morbid and sore, and passion, tempest-sprung, goes wild in all sorts of rampages. At one time we can be captious toward a friend, at another generous toward an enemy, at another about equally indifferent to both. Now a wise man is one who understands himself well enough to make due allowance for such unsane moods and varieties, never concluding that a thing is thus or thus, because just now it bears that look; waiting often to see what a sleep or a walk, or a cool revision, or perhaps a considerable turn of repentance will do. He does not slash upon a subject, or a man, from the point of a just now rising temper. He maintains a noble candor, by waiting sometimes for a gentler spirit, and a better sense of truth. He is never intolerant of other men's judgments, because he is a little distrustful of his own. He restrains the dislikes of prejudice, because he has a prejudice against his dislikes. His resentments are softened by his condemnations of himself. His depressions do not crush him, because he has sometimes seen the sun, and believes it may appear again. He revises his opinions readily, because he has a right, he thinks, to better opinions, if he can find them. He holds fast sound opinions, lest his moodiness in change should take all truth away. And if his unsane thinking appears to be toppling him down the gulfs of skepticism, he recovers himself by just raising the question, whether a more sane way of thinking might not think differently. A man who is duly aware thus of his own distempered faculty, makes a life how different from one who acts as if he were infallible, and had nothing to do but just to let himself be pronounced! There is, in fact, no possibility of conducting a life successfully on in that manner. If there be any truth that vitally concerns the morally right self-keeping and beauty of character, it is that which allows and makes room for the distempers of a practically unsane state; one that puts action by the side of correction, and keeps it in wisdom by keeping it in regulative company. Just to act out our unsanity is to make our life a muddle of incongruous, half-discerning states without either dignity or rest. There is no true serenity that does not come in the train of a wise, self-governing modesty.

For the same general reasons we need, in maintaining a right treatment of the world, to understand the condition of unsanity in which it also lies. Our friends must not be infallible; our enemies must be allowed their just palliations; our charities must not only cover a multitude of sins, but a great many weaknesses and blots beside. The mere crotchets of some men are to have as much respect as the over-wise judgments of others. Proud airs are to be had in compassion, commonly, as revelations of disease, or lack in the function of self-understanding.

Opinions are to have a certain allowance or liberty of error, because they are human. Motives are to be tenderly judged, because many thorns of evil are festering under them. There is not a bad thing felt or done, in all the wrongs of the world, that is not to be viewed understandingly, as being the wickedness of a creature partly weak and broken. And there is no best, greatest, noblest thing ever done, that is not partly to be more admired and partly less, because it is a deed that only some great inspiration could shape in the molds of mortal infirmity. We can not, in short, level one of our judgments or actions toward the world, so as to give it a perfectly right and skillful treatment, without being duly aware of its unsane condition.

Many, too, of the great moral questions are impossible to be answered rightly, when this fact is ignored. If we talk of development as the great want of man or society, it will be the development, if that is all, of unsanity, and toward unsanity. No development can help any thing which does not have corrective causes, whether discipline or gospel, working with it. Family order is family disorder, where nothing is attempted or allowed, but the simple growing of childhood. It were better not to be grown at all, unless there is some power to shape the growth that works correctively, by laws impressed and authority maintained. Public education is no handmaid of order and law, unless order and law are the handmaid of education. Moral weakness and distemper can be supplemented only by moral strength and the all-tempering sway of duty. If we talk of progress, or a law of progress, whether in society or character, there is no law of progress in mere living or continuance, when it is operated and molded by no guiding forces. Such mere continuance can do nothing better than to run the unsanity of nature down upon a savage state, which is, in fact, a kind of insanity bred in and in, and become incurable. Majorities are no reliable cure of public ills, unless the public ills are, somehow, gotten out of the majorities.

Great gales of impulse, that move whole nations, are not great inspirations or embodied wisdoms, as the immense numbers joined might seem to indicate,—the Crusades, for example, the French Revolution, the Southern Confederacy,—but they are great heats of unsanity rushing to their ultimation in frenzy.

Insanity, we thus perceive, has an immense, far-reaching moral use, considered as an extreme of dispossession that puts us duly in mind of our general distemper. We see it coming on by degrees, and culminating, here and there, in a complete overthrow of the moral nature. Then we consider what it was that was coming on by degrees, and discover the same kind of incipiencies and bad liabilities working in us all. So we understand ourselves, and what kind of keeping is necessary for us. We now make allowances for our moods, and the discoloration of our judgments. We steady our conduct of life by the laws of good manners, and keep it in right order by recognizing the moodiness and gustiness of our impulses. And so we meet the world as it is, do our duties to it in candor and charity, and are hurried away by no romantic expectations that promise a paradise without some rectifying light and discipline to make it possible. We act from the moral nature in ourselves toward a moral nature in the world, looking for no remedy of the common distemper, save in that complete re-establishment of the moral nature, which is health and sanity for all. And this work of re-establishment, we know, is possible only in that grace of religion which is come into the world, "to heal all that have need of healing." There is, in fact, no sufficiently real antagonism for insanity or unsanity, but that which is the divinely qualified antagonism of sin. Let the weary, heavy laden, sorely possessed mind of the world turn itself to Christ, and it shall find rest. And when we come to this, when as a race we drink at this fountain "the spirit of a sound mind," we shall, for the first time, discover how far off we have been from sanity, and how beautiful a thing true, perfect sanity may be.

XIII.

OF THE ANIMAL INFESTATIONS.

It is a difficulty encountered by the Paleyizing, or Bridgewater school of theologians, that what they gain by their argument from design, they sometimes appear to lose by the discredit they bring on the ends for which designs are made. Thus, if we take it for a fact that the whole creation is a framework of design—every object, and creature, and member, being nicely adapted to its uses—then it follows of necessity, that all beaks and talons, all claws and cuspidal teeth, all fangs and stings and bags of venom, are adapted to their particular uses as accurately and studiously as any thing else is seen to be; and then again it follows that as some creative builder is shown to exist by so many tokens of design, the apparent badness of the design indicates a malign power in him, working just as evidently for ends not good. Various devices are planned, it is true, for turning the argument, but, as far as I have seen, with very little show of success. If then, it be as great a matter to discover the goodness of God as to discover God; if indeed we make no discovery of God at all when we trace him in designs that are related to ends either bad or doubtfully good, there ought certainly to be some explication of the difficulties referred to that is more satisfactory.

Thus it is put forward by Kirby, that "all organized beings have a natural tendency to increase and multiply," and that Providence "sets necessary bounds to their increase, by letting them loose upon each other." "In our first view of nature," he says, "we are struck by a scene which seems to be one of universal conflict —man constantly engaged in a struggle with his fellow-man, laying waste the earth, and slaughtering its inhabitants; his subjects of the animal kingdom following the example of their master, and pitilessly destroying each other." And the solution which he thinks sufficient is that, "unless the tendency to multiply had been met by some such check, animated beings would be perpetually encroaching upon each other, and would finally perish for want of sufficient food." And why not as well let them perish in that way, as by devouring each other? What comfort is it to the lamb that a lion has eaten him up, and prevented the over-multiplication of sheep by the larger multiplication of lions? Is it not also the precise point of objection here, that such kind of arguments look for the increase of just those creatures that are worthless and destructive, and a limitation of increase in the harmless and useful? Besides, how easy was it for the Creator to keep down the over-population of the animal races, by making them less fruitful, or shortening the time of their life!

In another connection, when speaking of animals "particularly injurious to man," Kirby suggests that they have their object in "his punishment." And this, he thinks, may be true, more particularly of "those personal pests, that not only attempt to derive their nutriment from him by occasionally sucking his blood, as the flea, the horse-fly, and others, but of those which make a settlement within him, infesting him with a double torment." But almost every kind of animal, as truly as man, suffers by injury from some other, and has in fact its pests without and pests within, after the same manner. Are we then to say that every such animal is undergoing punishment ? A far more general fact may indeed be true, viz., that the whole creation, animals and men together, is groaning in the common liabilities and corporate reactions of evil; which, if we call it punishment, is not a private dealing in terms of personal justice, but only a shock of general disorder in the world itself.

At still another point, Mr. Kirby contrives to get a semblance of comfort in the supposition, that the tormenting insects are blood-letters which prevent the cattle from overfeeding by their annoyance, and so promote their health; also that man is compensated here, as regards the torment he experiences, "by the care of the wise Physician, who prescribes the painful operation, and furnishes his chirurgical operators with the necessary knives and lancets." But unhappily the amount of blood taken by such infestations is too small to support the argument, and the amount of poison or pain dispensed too large to allow us any though' or care, whether some drops of blood are gone or not. If we could be let off with the blood-letting, taken without the poison, we should scarcely want any such chirurgical analogy for our comfort.

In still another place, Mr. Kirby launches a different suggestion, in which he appears to have a more theologic satisfaction; observing, with regard to "this constant scene of destruction, this never-intermitted war of one part of the creation upon another, that the sacrifice of a part maintains the health and life of the whole, and the great doctrine of *vicarious suffering* forms an article of physical science. Thus does the animal kingdom, in some sort, preach the gospel of Christ." The capitals in which this last clause is put do not appear to be wanted; for the meaning it conveys is sufficiently horrible, I think, without additional emphasis. That there is a really answering relation, between a bullock eaten by a grizzly and the death of the cross, is simply revolting. As little will a sparrow killed by a hawk be conceived to have died for the hawk, or a child for a viper that bit him, or a man for the gorilla that clubbed him in the wood. Such attempts at Christian argument are doubtless well meant, but they are, to say the least, very unfortunate.

Dr. Paley himself handles the argument here with better effect. Admitting distinctly, at the outset, that "venomous animals and animals preying upon one another" are constructed with organs that must be referred to design, and obliged also to allow that "we cannot avoid the difficulty, by saying that the effect was not intended," he only imagines that our trouble is created by our ignorance, and that, having so many and preponderant cases of beneficent design discovered to us, we are required to have it as "a reasonable presumption," that the goodness of his purpose would sufficiently appear, if we understood his purpose more deeply. And exactly this we shall by and by see to be true, only we shall find the truth outside of all mere physical ends and reasons. Not satisfied, however, with this merely excusing way of vindication, he goes on to specify something which may "extenuate the difficulty;" (1) that the venomous creatures, for example, have their venom faculty only as a good to themselves, because it is the power by which they subdue their prey, and so are able to feed their bodies—which is far as possible from being true of whole tribes of venomous insects, like the gnat, or mosquito, taking the sleeper off his defense, humming first their poisonous note in his ear, to vex the quiet of his rest, and then having sucked their fill with his blood, leaving the poisonous toll of their blessing in the wound for compensation; the very complaint against them being, not that they kill, not that they get their living, but that they bestow their venom gratis, and with no conceivable reason; (2) that such kinds of venomous creatures and beasts of prey do not, after all, kill as many people as we think, and much oftener kill other animals and not men—a very small comfort, if we can not know that their venom does no killing at all but for good; (3) that the venomous species, vipers and rattlesnakes for example, stand guard, so to speak, for "whole tribes" that have a similar look and no venom—a very far-fetched argument, to say the least, which does not even show that the protected tribes are not themselves more terribly harassed by the venom of their protectors, than by the other enemies these are supposed to intimidate, or affect with shyness; (4) that it is our fault, in which we are to blame ourselves, that we crowd after and annoy the venomous creatures, and do not let them have the dens and dry places where they belong, unmolested—a much better argument, if they did not crowd after us, into our cities, and houses, and chambers.

Having exhausted this line of argument with little apparent success, he finally subsides into the same field, where Mr. Kirby is but a follower, showing how it was necessary, in order to keep the world full, that all creatures should be over-fecund in their increase, and then when the spaces are stocked to have such thinning off provided for, that all populations will be graduated by their supplies, and the contracted or expanded limits of their field. Thus he imagines, "that immense forests in North America would be lost to sensitive existence, if it were not for gnats, and that vast plains in Siberia would be lifeless without mice." But the great difficulty is to see what interest eternal benevolence has, whether in the population of gnats or of mice—how there should be any complaint of a lack of "sensitive existence," because there is a lack of gnats in the forests, if only there is enough of them in the populated regions; or why we should be much concerned for the plains of Siberia, because of the want of mice, as long as the cities and towns are so far from being "lifeless" on that account. However this may be, it is really a considerable impeachment of Providence, to say that God can no other way limit the superfecundity of his creatures, than by giving them venom to poison, and claws to tear each other. God is conditioned only by what is absolute or unconditional; but venom-bags and claws do not belong to the absolute.

There is plainly no solution for this difficulty which stops short in the mere physical economy, considering only ends and uses that pertain to mechanical and bodily conditions. Nobody ever saw far enough into God's designs to justify him, who did not see far enough to distinguish what ends his designs are for; viz., the moral ends and uses of existence. This frame of things was never understood, and never will be, without going back of things; it is mere jargon otherwise, confusion, absurdity, poison, torment—any thing and every thing but rationality and goodness. Here, then, is our question—viz., whether any sufficient account of venom and destructiveness in the animal infestations is to be discovered in the moral wants and uses of existence? And here we are met by the discovery—

1. That a great part of the evils of life are on us purposely, and not by accident, or by any kind of fatality, or pantheistic necessity. Many of us would like to imagine that our pests, and poisons, and various kinds of torments are at least not designed; that however

they may come, they are only mysterious; or that if they must be allowed to be, in some sense, from God, the Universal Creator, it must in reverence be held, that he did not mean to have them as annoying and deadly as we find them to be. Then let any one dissect a talon, or a claw, or a carnivorous jaw, and decide whether there is any contrivance here for tearing and devouring flesh; and whether any preparation for scenting is deliberately contrived, in the outspread nervous texture of the nostril. Whence came that terrible vise in the mouth of a shark, and whose invention is it? That viper fang, both sharp and hollow, laid down flat upon the jaw when there is no occasion for it, but hung with pulleys of muscle to throw it up when attack is to be made, allowing it now, in the bite, to be pressed directly down upon a bag of liquid venom deposited just under its roots—whose invention is this? Is it not plainly a deliberate contrivance, as truly, visibly deliberate as any injecting or ejecting engine in the world? And how many venomous creatures are there —spiders, ants, ticks, scorpions, serpents, flies, mosquitoes, centipedes, that have their bags of poison made ready, as the fearful artillery of their otherwise contemptible life! Let no one imagine that such kind of artillery is not meant; there is no other that is gotten up with a machinery more skillful, or with better ammunition. All that may be done with such tools is plainly meant to be done. Whatever else may be true, God has created venom, and we must not scruple to say it. If we have any conception of goodness that forbids this kind of possibility in God, then our God plainly enough does not exist, or the God that does exist is not he. The really existent God, as we can see with our eyes, is such a being as can use contrivance in adjusting the due apparatus, both of prey and of poison. And we need not scruple to confess a degree of satisfaction in this kind of discovery, showing that goodness is no such innocent, mawkishly insipid character, no such mollusc softness swimming in God's bosom as many affect to suppose; that it has resolve, purpose, thunder in it, able to contrive hard things, when hard are wanted. No other impression is at all equal to the moral training for which we are sent hither. If we could not see distinctly that God is able to plan for suffering, and prepare the machinery to produce it, what we call his goodness would only be a weak, emasculated virtue, which, if we should praise it, would not long keep our respect. One of the very first and most necessary conditions of a right moral government in souls is vigor; a will that is visibly asserting itself everywhere in acts of sovereignty that do not ask our consent. It is better for us even to be shocked sometimes, than never to be impressed. Mere safe-keeping is not rugged enough to answer the moral uses of our life. Elemental forces, grinding hard about us and upon us, are necessary to the due unfolding of our moral and religious ideas, and it is in just these severities of discipline that we afterward discover the deepest counsels of beneficence, and the highest culminations of eternal goodness itself.

2. We here perceive that not only dangerous and fierce animals are wanted as the necessary furniture of our discipline, but a large supply of annoyances, irritants, and disgusting infestations. We laugh at these creatures many times, and try to amuse ourselves at their expense, and it might not be desirable to take them more seriously, but it is a very serious matter, nevertheless, that we have them to laugh at. Indeed it is even a fair subject of doubt whether we get as much real discipline, after all, from all the beasts of prey together, as we do from any single one of a half dozen tribes of pests that infest the world—ants, mosquitoes, wood-flies, jiggers, and the like. A part of their value is that they annoy us enough to keep us awake, and if they sometimes keep us awake when we are really demanding sleep, it is not altogether ill. Unmolested sleep might settle us at length into lethargy. We want irritants to stir us up and nettle us into vivacity, as truly as we do the lull of music and breeze to quiet us. Besides, we are always trying to get the world into a law of happiness, as if that were the main errand here, or as if God made it and must needs take it to be the law of his will. How often do we say this, and sometimes we even set our speculation upon it, to show that so it must be It was very important, therefore, to keep us off this ground, and worry and sting us away from it. And to this end doubtless it is that God lets in upon us, on our face, and hands, and whole bodily skin, such numberless troops of hostile infestation. They come with bite, and creeping feet, and slimy

touch, and sting, and stinging voice. They break no bones, they stir in general no fear, they seem to have no errand that could not as well be dispensed with. And yet, they do bring irritations, annoyances, disgusts upon us, that have a considerable significance, and ought to have, must have, a considerable use. Not all the elephants, and tigers, and hyenas, and crocodiles of the world, have a thousandth part of the power exerted by these on our feeling and temperament. And it is a great thing they do, when they only keep us off the folly of conceiving that God is principally concerned with us here to make us happy. Therefore he shows us that he is not, by instrumentations most unremorseful, most deliberately contrived; leaving us nothing less or different to believe, than that he is shaping us to good, moral good, let the happiness and all the fine computations of pleasures fare as they may. But these are things by the way; the grand determining reason for the existence of these creatures and the divine contrivance in them is to be found, I have no doubt—

3. In the fact that, in order to our highest moral benefit, there is a fixed necessity that we have a world so prepared in its furniture, as to be a representation of man to himself. It would be impossible to carry on our moral training, if we could not be insphered in conditions that reflect, express, and continually raise in us the idea of what we are. It is not enough that what may be known of God should be clearly seen in things that are made; other great purposes of existence can be secured only as we have images and a language to

mirror the nature, and state, and moral quality of our action. The world must be a dictionary where objects are supplied, that may serve as bases of words inherently significant of what is in us to be signified. And it is here that Swedenborg comes in with his doctrine—whence derived I really do not know—of correspondences. Nothing is more certain, however he came by his doctrine, than that all moral terms of language suppose pre-existing terms of correspondence in the world's objects, that fitly represent or express the moral ideas and facts of our personality. It is also remarkable that all most expressive words and images, in this department of speech, are derived from animals; which, again, he says, were not created as we know them, but "exist from man." By which I suppose him to mean, that while they exist, in a sense, from God's appointment, they take their evil type, whatever it be, from the evil in man. A similar thought appears to be laboring in the story of the curse reported in Genesis; viz., that in some sense there is a general unmaking of the world by transgression, in which it changes type and falls with the fall of the occupant. So far, accordingly, it will be *from man*, bearing the expressional stamp of man; and it makes no difference whether it is changed after such a fall and by it, or adapted to it by anticipation. Be this matter as it may, all the animal types especially; the bats, and owls, and unclean birds of night; the tigers, wolves, foxes, alligators; all the serpents, and venomous creatures, and base vermin, with all the disgusting or annoying infestations of insect life, are appointed to serve grand purposes of benefit in the moral training of souls. Their destructive, poisonous, and loathsome nature, carrying all nicest, most deliberative marks of design, is good because it is evil; that is, because it expresses so faithfully what most needs to be expressed, in these four particulars: (1) the ferocity of our sin; (2) the venom principle there is in it; (3) the immense disturbing power it obtains, even under the limitations of our human insignificance; and (4) the interior efficacy it has in its working. These four factors let us consider more deliberatively, and each by itself.

First, then, nothing is more certain than that evil, as a law of selfishness, begets rapacity, violence, and even a certain ferocity in wrong, which wants reminders set on every side, and a world packed full of images to show the picture of it; and then that these same images should pack the languages with words, to be the coins of interchange, description, observation, accusation, reflective thought, concerning it. The moral uses of life would fail if the outward state were not made answerable and largely analogous to the state within. Hell in the bosom could not see or know itself in a paradise. If prey is the element within, it must be duly objectivized in the element without. To say that animals are organized for prey, and made creatures of prey, just to keep down over-multiplication, is to fool ourselves in a very slim pretext of physical adaptation, and miss altogether the grand symbolism in the stupendous engineering of God for our moral and immortal benefit. Indeed, the only good point there is in that physical solution is, that the tribes thinned away are the least harmful and most useful, and the tribes of extermination that remain precisely those which are most utterly worthless and piratical; for there seems to be some use in that, when taken as a revelation of the terrible devastations of wrong, extirpating innocence always, and emptying the world of righteousness. Still there is not much in this; for it will be seen that, in the long run, the more harmless and useful animals, having a domestic value, will obtain defenders, and will over-live and over-multiply their destroyers, and will even stock the world after these are extinct. However this may be, the general purpose of God in these creatures of prey is plain as it well can be. They are given to be our kinsmen, the cousins-german of our sin. They are the moral furniture of a world in selfishness and evil. There is a kind of bad litany in them, howling congenially with all wrong feeling and doing. They not only kill and devour savagely, by sting, and fang, and beak, and claw, but some of the least of them march out mannishly in columns and fight pitched battles, lasting for whole days; and they even take on airs of high civility, by reducing fellow tribes to a condition of regular slavery; where, as they were heroes in fight, they become lords in mastership and exaction. Sometimes they work by satire, as in the case of the ants here referred to; sometimes by terror, by spitefulness, by cunning stealthiness and tricks of decoy, by immense deglutitions, by any and all sorts of animal habits that connect with prey, ferocities, voracities and disgusts that make it symbolic of evil. In this way they give us profitable company, and keep us at home in surroundings morally adapted to the omnivorous habit of our sin—no very honorable calling for them, but an excellently useful and even morally indispensable one for us.

I proposed also to speak, secondly, of the venom principle incorporated in a great many animals, and especially of the moral analogy it fills in relationship with evil. The number of animals that have the gift of poison, and have bags of poison carefully prepared, in connection with a hollow sting, or bill, or fang, or claw, for the injection of it, is larger than many appear to know. Sometimes the object is to repel, or disable an attack, and is only defensive. Sometimes it is to incapacitate and prostrate the animal that is to be taken as prey, where it classes with all other contrivances for the capture of supplies. But there are cases where the venom appears to be dispensed gratis, just because it belongs to a venomous nature to put forth that kind of power. What can the venomous spider, or the venomous ant, Solpuga, mean, but simply mischief, when, creeping over a man by night, he vaccinates him with a mortal poison? The mosquito comes, we know, to get his supply of blood, and so we may not object; for if he is to exist, he must live. But the strange thing is that he pays for the blood he gets with the poison he leaves. His victim was asleep, we may suppose, and there was no resistance. All that he wanted he took, but he must needs distil a poison before he goes; without any pretext of self-defense, or of doing it to capture supplies, but sometimes even waking his victim by it, after he has gotten his fill. It is as if the very bill of the animal exuded poison by the simple instigation of pleasure itself. Other infestations of the forest and the chamber impart their venom in a similar way, when, apparently, they have nothing to gain by it. What, then, does it mean, that infusions of venom have so large a place in the very contrivance of so many animal natures? The natural theologians give us no plausible, or even tolerable answer. Their whole scheme of argument from design is at fault in this matter, and must be, till they ascend above the mere physical ends of contrivance, and behold those moral ends which are the sovereign, all-controlling reasons of God, in what he creates or designs.

The fearful truth, never to be hid or lost sight of, though indignantly repelled by many, is that the state of wrong or sin in mankind goes beyond selfishness and the rapacious instincts of prey, and does sometimes become a venomous principle, doing evil because it is evil, perpetrating mischief because it is mischief, and havoc because it has that kind of power. More commonly, the crimes committed—arson, robbery, rape, murder—are such as gain or some hope of advantage instigates. Indeed, we seldom encounter examples where wrong is done for the mere sake of wrong; though now and then we do meet even such. Our poor freedmen of the South, for example, hunted, whipped, hung upon trees, burned up in their huts by night—what have they done, what are they going to attempt, that such barbarous severities are put upon them? The simple answer is, that men who are fiends will fulfill the definition, doing deeds of havoc, or of torment, for the enjoyment of it! Fearful is the truth that such beings can exist, appalling is the fact that they do. Even so madly inspired by evil is it possible for man to be. These hapless creatures, lately slaves, are free by no offense of their own. The hares of the wood are scarcely less capable of harm than they. No, their crime is that they have been injured; for as Tacitus, with true insight, declares, "Whom a man hath injured him he hates." Dear sport is it, therefore, to set them flying into the bush; music itself to hear them howl and beg under a limb! This element of mischief for the sake of mischief, not often displayed in as flagrant examples, still enters largely into human conduct. We have not made up the full inventory of evil, when we have simply shown what selfishness will do for selfish ends. Evil has a demonizing power, not working always by calculation, but sometimes by a spell, and becoming thus, by its own bad inspiration, an end to itself. So far there is nothing in nature to represent it, or be its analogy. The revenge of elephants, the cunning stealth of foxes, the prey of wolves and tigers, the blood-hunger of leeches—not all the powers of damage and destruction wielded by all the animals can at all represent this kind of evil-doing. Only venom can sufficiently do it; and without the venom-bags, and bills, and fangs, and stings, and claws, the moral furniture of the world would not be complete. Evil for evil's sake, disinterested evil, is the fearful possibility and fact that must have signs and a language provided. In this office all the venomous animals do service, and more especially such as do not use their functions for self-defense, or the conquest of supplies, but distill their poison *gratis* or without reason.

Again, thirdly, it was necessary to a true understanding of our responsibility in evil-doing, that the plea of insignificance be taken away from us,—which appears to be done most effectively by the fact that we are made to suffer so great torment or damage, often, by creatures of prey, or venom, that are exceedingly small. We are perfectly defenseless against them in a great many cases, because they are small. A single mosquito will defy and torture a man all night, when if it were a horse or an elephant, he would very shortly have him in control. A single jigger, scarcely visible to the eye, will hide himself under the skin and have a populous city there, before there is even a thought of such occupancy. The land-leeches of the woods of Ceylon will scent a man before he arrives, and, hurrying toward him, will dart their thread-like bodies through his clothing, pinning it to his skin, so that when he comes out, fifty heads will be pumping at his blood. Sometimes the diminutive creatures come in armies, and there is no conquering host of men whose march is half as destructive, or half as difficult to resist. The weevil, the fly, the caterpillar, the army-worm, the locust, the military hornet, that "drove out the Amorites before Israel"—who can withstand? When the latter loom up as a cloud on the plains of Syria, they fill the company of travelers with greater consternation than a water-spout, and set them flying madly every way, if only the torture permits,—otherwise they lie down with their animals and die. It is even reported that Sapor, king of Persia, was compelled by a cloud of gnats to raise the siege of Nisibij; where the very point of contest lay between the gnats on one side, and his elephants on the other, and the latter were put to rout, with his whole army, just because the insect creatures had too great advantage over creatures in such mark for bulkiness and indefensible majesty. In all which examples we discover, that the most fearful, most perfectly irresistible enemies we encounter are the smallest, the mere living specks of the creation. They come in greatest power, be it as one or as many, and we are most appalled by them, because we are least capable of defense against them. In this manner they invert all our notions of size, and make diminutiveness a terror. So that when we shrink away from all terrors of responsibility, because we are practically dwarfed and sunk out of sight before the oppressive weight and magnitude of God, we have a mental correction already prepared, in the fact that size has come to signify so little as regards real power and consequence. There is no size, either in agents or actions, that has consequence. If we die for the bite of an ant, it signifies as much as that we die for the bite of a tiger. Doubtless God is a very great being, and it may seem that we can do little against his immensity, but all the more does it signify that we can sting the immense sensibility of his goodness. It is the moral significance of actions that creates their true guiltiness, not their size, or report, or show, or linear sphere of dimensional effect. The ingratitude, the falsity, the venom, the poison, the monstrous filthiness and corruption—these are the offense, and the measure is quality of meaning, not any bulk of movement or physical effect. We are not too small, however diminutive, to do great injuries to God, and move revulsions in his pure feeling that are only the more prodigious offense, because they wound sensibilities essentially infinite and infinitely tender.

I proposed also, fourthly, to speak of these destructive and venomous animals considered as types of the interior working of evil. We might easily get occupied with wrong as a merely exterior affair—the annoyance, misrule, destructiveness, oppressiveness, and the numberless inconveniences and desolations of it. Almost everybody is so far against wrong, and many are stirred up by the dreadful miseries of it, to become reformers against it. The danger was that we might always be looking outwardly to find it, and not realizing at all the deep, all-penetrating, thoroughgoing infection of it—humanity pricked through with evil infestations and disorders might, perchance, not be at all conceived. What then does it signify, that we are not only beset with so many external infestations and infections, but are so commonly attacked within, by hideous creatures that undertake to be co-inhabitants with us! It is no pleasant subject, but the naturalists are obliged in mere science to make out at least twenty species of these pestiferous creatures, that inwardly inhabit and are peculiar to man; even as the cattle to the pastures, or the fishes to the sea. They fix on any organ of the body, too, according to their kind, from the brain downward, and many of them have such power that life is finally sure to be discomfited by them. A symbol so impressive can not but impress, and will even more deeply impress, when the revelations of science are more familiarly known. We do, in fact, have this impression largely verified in us, before such revelations arrive; we believe that powers of death are lurking everywhere in us, as that we are wrong in fact all through. The infection, we say, is deep, and mortality has the touch of every thing that lives—which touch is internal. That which is within defileth. The immense value of all such impressions, recognizing evil as infesting life at the core, is greater than we often imagine. We sometimes call it corruption, imagining in the very word a kind of venomous action; all which is figure of course, representing the tremendous body-and-soul-dissolving infestations of evil working inwardly. Life has been so contrived, that we can not well miss the idea, however much or little we know of the verminous infestations referred to, as therapeutically discovered and scientifically taught.

On the whole, I think it will be seen that the destructive and venomous animals of the world have a good reason for their existence. If there is any thing dark in their existence, it is not solved in the very shallow philosophy that supposes their introduction for mere physical ends. There is no solution massive enough, and grand enough, to meet the real scope of the problem, save that they are all the outfit and furniture of a moral system, and the uses such a system is ordained to serve. They belong to the revelation and fit discipline of evil, being symbols, physical analogies, such as draw their type from man, and not from the beauty and goodness of God. What he is they become for his sake; for in him, as a creature going into wrong, they all received their law and came forth, in their time, to work with him in the sad but really wild and terribly sublime history of his life.

XIV.

OF DISTINCTIONS OF COLOR.

When we speak, as Americans, of distinctions of color, or distinctions of races marked by color, we are meditating probably the existence, in particular, of the African or black race, and the possible reasons for their existence. Our attention is specially centered on them, because their existence heretofore as bondmen among us has been at so great cost, having shaken nearly to its fall the Republic itself; also because, being now emancipated by the fortunes of war, they bring us a most difficult problem, viz.: what to do for them, or by what kind of recomposition to prepare them a condition of hope and righteously protected liberty? Their condition, we are obliged to perceive, is a condition of immense disadvantage. How much of respect they might command by their own natural force and character, it is not easy to say; but the stigma we have ourselves put upon them by our wrong—this, if nothing else,—has thrown a crushing weight of disrespect upon them, such as makes it far more difficult for them to hold a self-asserting position among us. When considering, too, by what means we can help their depressed condition, we are greatly discouraged by the fact, that their former masters will endure them in a condition of power, however qualified, only with difficulty, and are likely to break out, almost any day, in bloody conspiracy against them; also by the fact that so many of our own race will be making prey of them; and again by the fact that large numbers of them have already caught the poison of vices that will make them a prey to themselves. They become, in this way, a kind of mystery of unhopefulness; so that we can not pass a little colored child in the street, and especially one that is neatly dressed and has a look of careful motherhood, without sighing inwardly and sometimes with a moistening eye—"poor hapless one, what place or good possibility is there in the world for you? Growing up, you grow into what; for what can you be? Scarcely have you a right to be, or become, any thing?"

Perhaps we carry our pity too far; perhaps our want of respect for the race, partly caused by our own abuse of them, does not see as much that is hopeful in them as there really is. They discover often a remarkable talent, and there are certainly individuals among them, who have power to make a character and carve out a way of success. There have been such examples discovered among the Indian races, but the difficulty has ever been with them to get such hold of the race, as a whole, that they could be put forward in culture and saved from extinction. It may not be so here; it probably would not, if their friends in the white race could have them to themselves, separated from the plunder and poison of their enemies. But that again is impossible. They must take their places with us, and maintain a footing for themselves in our society; and if we can not help them, and shelter them, by such protection here as will enable them to maintain it, they must inevitably go under.

They are far more hopeful subjects of culture and civilization, in certain of their qualities and points of character, than the Indians. Their humanities are immensely large in comparison. They can have a sense of home. They are too genial for the dry revenge and prowling wolfishness of Indian life. They have worldfuls of music in their sentiment, and close to this a most wonderfully inspirational capacity for religion; and these, in one view, are about the highest capabilities of man. All the higher, that they are connected here with a remarkable capacity or power to seize on the second sense or figure-power of facts and symbols, which is the distinctive mark of all true poetic faculty, and was never more conspicuous in the untrained habit and imagination of any people in the world. Such a race may never be distinguished in the matter of invention, or provisional and productive enterprise; but who can say that they will not have a sufficiently grand work to do in the world's last days, when whole races of fresh-born prophets and singers may be wanted, to bear up the world to its last level of inspired elevation, and free rhythmic play. The Jewish race, let us not forget, is also a generally disrespected race: and that, in great part, just because the sordid qualities that belong to their habit are forced upon them, and bred in and in, by the long ages of cruelty and oppression they have suffered under Christian power; and yet we are obliged to admit, that they are among the most talented, if not the very most, of all the races of mankind.

In such kind of suggestions we make our sallies after hope; and still we are obliged somehow to fall back under discouragement and a seeming overcast of doom, regarding the future of this hitherto ill-starred African race. It is as if their color was the stamp of night on their history, both past and future. They are in a case that perplexes beneficence, and discourages the expectation of friendly statesmanship; and we are put here to the question, how it was and why, that Providence allowed them to be entered into our more advanced society?—a condition so unhopeful, so nearly impossible to them, and so perplexing and full of oppressive concern to us. Getting no satisfactory answer, in this matter of historic providence, we go farther and begin to arraign the fact of their creation; asking why God should have put a race in existence encumbered with such disadvantages? Their dark faces veil a darker mystery; and the more we are drawn to them, by their free good nature, and the warm humanities we learn often to admire in their friendship, the more heavily are we oppressed by the very hard lot so mysteriously put upon them, in the unfavored type of their race.

Is it possible then—this is our question—either to instance, or to imagine, any reasons of beneficence that will practically account for their misfortune, or make us less disposed to question the divine goodness in their creation? I think it is, and that if we carefully attend to the real conditions of the problem, we shall discover such benefits secured by the distinctions of color and type here in question, as will greatly diminish our perplexities, and make the colored race themselves more nearly content with their lot. In this view I put forward—

1. What is certainly a matter of great moral significance for humanity at large, the very certain fact, that, under this distinction of races, we arrive at a very different, vastly more cogent, impression of the under-soul, the man, the everlasting, divinely moral personality, such as we should never develop under conditions of strict homogeneity. If the various stocks and families of the world were copies visible, one of another, and each of all, the immortal, spiritual nature, the real man, would be swamped to a great degree under the reigning similarities. The external duplications would occupy us, or take us away from those inward explorations, which great external distinctions would provoke. These distinctions put us on a way of abstraction, by which we cast off this and that, and all the more impressive unlikenesses of the external nature, till we come down, by our process of exclusion, to the grand common property or somewhat, that refuses to be taken away; and this we say is the stock man, that which, being duly housed, gets also its due exercise under all the particular colors and types that are given it. As a result of this abstractional process, we learn to look upon the

properties excluded as having only a lighter and more secondary consequence; while the unreducible diamond of the moral nature, that which forms absolute ideas and receives their immutable stamp in its character, proving in that manner its plainly godlike affinities—that we say is the man, the everlasting man, the same as to kind, under all colors and aspects and configurations.

It is not pretended that we all consciously reason in this manner, for we do not. Most of us probably were never conscious of any such process in our lives. I only say that, without being aware of it, we get our impression largely of the common timber included in our moral word, *man*, in this manner. We have seen, or heard of very different kinds of peoples; and throwing off the accidents of difference, we strike directly in upon the core, and say: These are the real humanities. We have them, too, in this manner, with a wonderful distinctness, such as we could not arrive at without some purchase of antagonism or point of reaction physiologically given, to set us in upon the true discovery. The distinctions of color and race will sometimes strike us, for the moment, with such force that we seem to be stunned or confounded, and so, and for so long a time, the sense of a common unity is quite driven out of us; but our next thought strikes through the casement of color and body into the *men*, and the word has a ring of eternity and true moral significance, more distinctly pronounced than we could ever get for it under any one given type and color.

Certain low-minded scorners of the African race, who are willing to insult them by any most cruel caricature of their physical type, and would even delight, if possible, to put them outside of humanity, compare them, under mock pretensions of science, with the African gorillas and chimpanzees, as if separated from them only by slight shades of difference. Suppose, then, it should be discovered that these mere animal creatures of the forest, such as we have supposed them to be, still have endowments of humanity like these:—They are capable of home. They do not simply love their children till they are grown up to maturity and then shake them off like the animals and forget them; but continue to live with them till they die; and want them nigh, even to the third and fourth generation. They do not work by instinct, like bees and beavers, but use new methods and contrive new arts. They discover laws in things, and have beginnings of science. They frame political organizations, and maintain distributions of justice. They have the same absolute ideas of truth, and right, and love, that men have. Hairy and wild creatures to look at, they have, nevertheless, a remarkable capacity for music, and their music has power to move the deepest, finest human sentiment. They have the gift of language, not only recollecting certain mere names to go at their call, as many animals do, but they take the interior, second sense of words, and the spiritual meanings or expressions of figures and images; which proves their intelligence [*intus lego*] and puts them clean over into the humanly intelligent class:

Nay, they can do more: they can improvise ballads that have a mysteriously wild, weird power, and even excite a certain wonder in the literary classes of the world. They are, furthermore, plainly and even superlatively religious, capable of high inspirations, and abounding in examples of practical beatitude and seership. What now shall we say of these quadruman people? We encounter no little disadvantage in the fact that we know them to be, physically speaking, animals, and nothing else. But no matter for that, if only we can hold our supposition firmly enough to make due account of the mind-tokens and spiritual capabilities discovered in them. Call them, after that, by what name we please—they still are men. They are not physiologically descended from the stock of Adam. But, if they were, it would not make them a whit more certainly human. By all the moral attributes they reveal, we even hear them say, with invincible self-affirmation, "*we also are men.*" And by just as much closer as they draw themselves to us, do they shove themselves farther off from the animals. They have come over to us, where the African race have always been, by force of the same high attributes; and the chasm that separates them now from all animals is on the other side, wide and deep as the unfathomable abyss between time and eternity. And the grand result is, that they sink all inferior distinctions of anatomy and color, and make us feel, as never before, how real and solid, how essentially everlasting, that moral nature, that sublime under-soul is, that we name when we call ourselves men. The moral advantage derived to us, in this manner, from the distributions of color and physical type in humanity, is great beyond our possible estimation; accruing to the benefit of laws, and liberties, and morals, and religion, by methods too numerous for computation. We think humanity more adequately because of it. Our genus *man* is not based in similarities of shape and color, but far deeper down, upon the hard-pan of an everlasting common property, which no classifications of shape and color can as decisively express.

2. It is another and partly distinct matter, that these diversities of race and color, exactly contrary to what is commonly assumed, are preparations of God for the outruling of slavery, and its final expurgation from the world,—proved to be such by experiment. Such distinctions of physiology do undoubtedly connect with a condition of weakness and low culture, that exposes, at first, to the wrong of slavery; but they begin, at the same time, to beget, and more and more intensify, the sense of kinship as a moral affair, till finally the slavery dies out under that which, taken as mere natural inferiority, was the principal facility and temptation to it. The remarkable thing about all our modern agitations against slavery is, that the question has been drawing closer and still closer down upon the last point where, in fact, every thing hinges, and where, as the debate is carried, the result will be final—there will never again be, as there never again can be, any re-institution of slavery, because the question is now

settled, or is soon to be, on the base of a *moral* kinship.

First we had slaveries of all races, more commonly such as were homogeneous. The early Romans captured and reduced to slavery the very peoples closest about the city. And these enslavements of races, in the same type, color, and culture, were the most cruelly severe the world has seen, and gave way soonest, partly for that reason, to considerations of public humanity. The argument came out now and then, and could not be suppressed, that such persons were too close akin, too visibly of one stock, which made the enslavement a shocking violation, as visibly, of nature. But the modern slavery is based more entirely on dissimilarities of stock, and grades of form and color assumed to be physically inferior. The discovery is made that here is a race or races, purposely made for slavery, and that slavery is the best possible condition for them. At this point the issue has been joined, and the argument for liberty has been that real human kinship is not a matter of the skin, or the hair, or the physical anatomy; but is of just that which we have seen to be more impressively developed, under and by means of such animal distinctions; viz., the fact of a grand common property in our moral nature, by which, as being men, we are made everlastingly congener to each other. The question ceases, in this manner, to be a question of mere natural sentiment, and becomes a question of relationship purely moral. On one side the effort is to insist on physical inferiorities; on the other, to make out the proof, by that very means, of a common under-soul, in which all are members of a universal, everlasting brotherhood. And just here it is that the question is being carried against slavery forever. It is no more a question of power against weakness; no more a question of the cuticle or the hair; but a question of moral right in one, assuming, as by force, to buy and control the moral right of another. We are learning to say: "No, it is impossible;" and that is the end of slavery forever.

Some persons have insisted much of late, and are even pressing the argument now, as against colored suffrage, that the African race are not of the same original stock with us, but are one of several distinctly created families, in the manner suggested by Prof. Agassiz, and by him positively asserted, both on grounds of science and of Scripture evidence. Our common belief has been different, and is not given up, viz.: that conditions of climate, and social disadvantage, have set this particular race, originally one with us, gravitating downward toward a less capable and more nearly animalized habit; and that so they have passed into their present type of form and color. We have taken, heretofore, what the Scripture says of our common sonship "in Adam," and of our being made "of one blood to dwell on all the face of the earth," as a literal declaration of our natural kinship and common derivation. Besides, it appears to us not a whit less credible, that the African race, put browning and baking under tropical suns for whole thousands of years, should have undergone so great a change, than that our American stock itself has been differed so widely, in its physiology, from the English, in but two centuries and a half. Our whole temperament is changed, our muscle is more wiry and capable of endurance, our brain is larger, our features sharper, our whole action more subtle and mercurial, and our mark distinguishably higher in the tables of longevity—in short, we are no more the same people. Not even the French stock are more visibly distinct from the English than we. Still we are far less concerned about this doctrine of another, distinctly African, stock, than we are about the very offensive and morally bad uses made of it. It may seem to us that they have a considerable advantage, as regards mere feeling, in the physical kinship we have allowed them. And yet, if they are to be taken as a race so fatally humbled by deterioration, it may put them in a case that is really far less hopeful, than to regard them as an original race, not yet raised by culture to their true pitch of power and possible eminence. If I were of the race, I should certainly prefer the latter. For, in this latter view, they lose nothing of their rank as men. To be " of one blood " with us signifies little by itself—nothing but a mere natural kinship—about as much as that calves may bleat responsively, in the sense of their fellow nature among cattle ; but to have the common under-soul, and common properties of kinship with God, and be another original stock by our side, and as such congener with us in all the moral affinities of our interior manhood—this is the really grand footing most of all to be desired. By what kind of rebuke then may we more fitly chastise the coarse, low-minded insolence of men, who fling it as a taunt upon the African race, that they are of another stock, than simply to ask, whether possibly it is not God's plan to finish this race last, and set them on the summit, when their day shall come, as the topstone of all righteous peace, and most inspired religion?

Recurring now, in the light of these suggestions, to the historic phases and facts of slavery in the past ages, we see more understandingly what has been going on. As a good type of the more ancient slavery, that which had no respect to race, we see the great Roman empire scouring the vast circuit of the nations in expeditions of conquest, from Britain round to Babylon, and from the Baltic round to the Great Desert, taking thousands and thousands of captives, and setting them off in trails, from every point of compass, toward Italy. Sold a dozen times over on their way, and having as many fortunes made out of them, they were poured in upon the Italian cities and farms to work and die. Some of the great landholders bought as many as twenty thousand of them, and had a complete power of life and death allowed them by the public laws. If any master was killed, all his slaves, within a given distance, were put to death. Many of the slaves were persons of rank and high personal accomplishments. And, what is above all sad to think of, the hardest, most unpitying severities of service fell to the lot of women. The vast bread-supply of all families and cities was ground by mills that were operated by women, and at this terrible wrench of toil, the fair daughters of Corinth, and the wild maidens of Thrace, and the stately matrons of Carthage, were all compelled to serve. Mercy appeared to be a thing forgot. There was no sensibility thought of or expected. A slave must be a slave, and there was no place for tenderness, be his kind or country what it would. How perfectly bereft of human pity for these captives the highest, most approved virtue of their owners could be, we may see distinctly, looking into their bosom as through an open window, when the horrid old virtue-dragon, Cato, censor-general of the morals of his time, gives written advice to the farmers to have it as a law of economy—and economy to him was virtue—"to sell worn-out iron implements, old slaves, sick slaves, and other odds and ends that have no further use on the farm!" There was no debate of right in this kind of slavery for a long time. Nations were natural enemies, and slavery was the natural punishment of enemies.

At length a new chapter was opened by the importation of negro slaves from Egypt. And these were very much sought after, because the public feeling was getting drugged by so great severities, and the critical task of managing so many great people. The new Africans were bought as household toys and ornaments, "valued for their complexion, and considered luxuries." Finally, after some ages have passed away, the modern slavery emerges in just this form. It takes possession of the African race, and thinks it no crime to appropriate their labor, because they are so very inferior, that having a master is having their natural privilege. They are not going to be captives, every way as respectable as their masters; but they are going to be things procured by commerce, and convenient, every way, to be so used—done up in a different color, which is to be the police-mark of their ownership. But the Christian sense of the world begins to look into this matter of color, and it comes out, more and more distinctly, that, under it, there are moral personalities, brothers of an everlasting, divine brotherhood, creatures of thought, and speech, and music, and vision, and having all most inborn rights of such. And so, by going down a stage, where color will cover it, slavery draws the argument down, to just that point where it is itself going to be weakest, and most certainly doomed to give way. In this manner it is now, in our own day, close upon its end, and it will soon be gone, never more to be seen. Farewell to it; for with it goes the rankest poison of private virtue, the worst blight of society, the most fatal incapacity sin has begotten for public law and liberty. From this point onward the world may breathe more freely!

3. It is a great thing, as regards the moral training of life and society, that distinctions of color and race help us to arrive at just conceptions of human equality. We begin, as already suggested, in a way of abstraction, casting off the inequalities that visibly inhere in one stock compared with another. So far there is no equality. Brought down thus upon the inner properties of

manhood, we are met by the discovery that individuals of the same race are certainly not equal, whether in quantity of being, or capacity of doing. Single persons, again, of a race that is inferior, will sometimes have a larger, more capable nature, than others of a superior race. So far, we find no base on which to build a scheme of duty that makes everybody the exact equal of everybody. On the contrary, a great part of the duties of life are based, and must be, in the fact that men are unequal; some inferior, some superior; some elected to power and leadership, and some to homage and trust. Every thing here will depend on how much of personal quantity and soul-force different men may have for their endowment; how much reason, conscience, love, will, vision, music, science, and worship, they have room for; and then it will be seen what precedences they are to yield, what deferences to pay, or what patronages to assume, what forward conditions to support. Thus far, the true beauty of life will consist in a due observance of inequalities; every man consenting to be himself, and let everybody else be himself too, in his own true measure. But, carrying our abstraction one degree farther, we do, at last, arrive at a stage of true unquestionable equality. Excluding all distinctions of type and appearance, and all diversities of quantity and force, we have left us an exact sameness of species. That is, we are all men, all moral natures, so completely akin to each other that truth to one is truth to another, right principle to one right principle to another, God, and love, and worship, and joy the same to all. So that here an almost new code of duties dawns on our discovery, assisted, in a marked degree, by the antagonisms of color, and the strange counter-envisagements that make sameness of kind so conspicuous. In this new code of equalities, our ripest, finest moral culture is to be perfected; and many have a large, long lesson here to learn, who do not yet imagine it. For there is a whole high tier of virtues opened here, that are really the most delicate of all, and have the finest mold of dignity. They are such as take note of, and observe, what belongs to sameness of kind; virtues that we class under the words *deference*, *consideration*, and the like. They are such kind of acts, as pay respect to man in that he is man; reflections, so to speak, of the respect a man has to himself. Consideration is a word that covers a whole class of virtues that, in beauty of soul, exceed all others. In that beauty it says: "This is a man, thus much I must observe in that he is a man. I must not wound his respect, must not violate his feeling. As he is a being in my own nature, I must do honor to him in that nature, as my fellow; I must do him true man-help for his manhood's sake." And how beautiful is the opportunity given for this late-growing kind of excellence, in the distinctions of race so often trampled by coarse insult, and brawling words of contempt!

When we come to assert our bill of rights in the State, rights that, in our American doctrine of liberty, are supposed to be included in the principle that we are "created equal," we are to base our civil equality just where we do our moral. We are equal and have equal rights, simply in the fact that we are all men, having all a right to be treated as men, and one as truly as another. If one is lame, another poor, another untaught, another varied by the color of his skin or the crisp of his hair, yet they are all men, and the law must do no disrespect to the equal and sublime right which inheres in their manhood. If the question be whether, as men, they have inherently the right of suffrage, the true answer is No; that right belongs to nobody as of course. A government may be every way legitimate which acknowledges no such right—whatever may be asserted by reformers and constitution-mongers to the contrary notwithstanding. But as the world advances, this prerogative of suffrage will be naturally extended; for, as the world is capable of it, and will be more capable of benefit because of it, a wider concession of it may be rightly demanded. And then, if it is conceded, it must be done equally, or impartially. If it is conditioned by sex, or age, or property, or ability to read, then it must be so conditioned for all. But if color is made the condition, then manhood is not, and equality is so far denied. Such law is but a name for oppression, whether it be a law of Connecticut, or of South Carolina. It may be difficult to establish, in certain parts of our Union, a basis of right so impartial; it may even cost us scenes of blood; but we have learned to bleed for our principles, and the duties we owe to our sublime future may help us, if we must, to do more of it.

4. It belongs to the genius of Christianity to prove itself by remarkable inversions of order, which it may well do here. It never moves in the same lines with policy, or state craft; considering by what combinations it may obtain weight, or by what wisely projected wars it may extend its dominion; neither in the same lines with philosophy, where the uncultured multitude are of no account, and the school is to win its success by the number and high intellectual distinctions of its pupils; but it begins with low-grade men, descending itself into their low grade of life. It begins at Nazareth, and is, morally speaking, born there, and Nazareth is the name of a mean provincial town that carries ignominy in the sound. It takes for its first disciples a company of Galileans, and these, unlettered fishermen. And from that day to this, it has been a gospel specially preached to the poor, and has raised great movements in the world by heaving continually upward; seldom by taking hold of powers at the summit of society and working downward. And the reason for this very singular inversion of order is not, that God prefers to let nobody have the compliment of his work but himself, or that he is set in willfulness and jealous self-assertion against the great and forward men who might move on his cause more rapidly. No, the real fact is that nobody can be duly taken hold of by the gospel, but the meek or humble. The wise, and prudent, and great, know too much, and are too full of their prodigious over-wisdoms, to really believe; only the babes of poverty and obscurity can do that, so as to verily

come into the gospel as it is. Paul was accepted as a man of learning, it is true, but he was so completely humbled by the hand of God upon him, as to be truly schooled into his place. Constantine also was allowed, as a king, to come into the fold, and it was a really dark dispensation; for the fold had a very heavy load to bear, when he put his kingcraft down upon them and their gospel. Accordingly it is one of the most remarkable facts of our Christian history, that it has been always exalting them of low degree, and setting them in advance of the lofty and the proud. It has been the kingdom of the weak, and has thrown itself up into power by the tremendous underlift of its humble, once dejected people.

For a truly observing, richly experienced Christian, therefore, it will be difficult, I think, not to anticipate another great turn of Christian history, to be sometime accomplished by another more sublime inversion of order than has ever yet been seen; I refer of course to the possible consummation of our gospel by the uplifting and spiritual new birth of the African race. In their present low state of culture they do not bear a hopeful look, but in certain points of quality and temperament that are most peculiar in them, they seem to be contrived, and made ready for some such grand final chapter of inversion. They are now the true Nazarenes and Galileans of the world—they are humble enough, and they know how to believe. It has been the great defect of what are called the western nations, that they speculate overmuch, and strangle the gospel, or make it small, by trying tc think it in their own small heads. They receive the inspirations of it cautiously of course, and only partially. But these Africans are constitutionally inspirable, and when they get far enough advanced in culture to be carried evenly, without excess, or undue heats of frenzy, and the clatter of our speculation is so far spent as to allow silence in heaven for a space, what may be more properly expected than a grand, prophesying testimony by these Africans, heard at the top of the world? Their gentle, friendly nature, tempered by the necessary culture, will make them popular, as their history makes them cosmopolitan, and the long affliction of their history will prepare them, not unlikely, to a kind of cosmopolitan precedence that moves no jealousy. Besides, the contempt of their person is now gone by; for how certainly is every worst complexion or worst texture of skin fined toward quality, by character and culture; and how easily, by variations how evanescent, are the lubber-lines of a wild, rude nature put flowing into grace and fair proportion, when the plastic hand of Christian beauty lays its touch upon them. Call them black, they will yet be written "black but comely," and our races most advanced in form will, it may be, have no gift of beauty more unqualified. When the believing throngs are gathered in therefore from the East and the West, and the North and the South, to sit down together in the kingdom, even as Christ has given us to expect, what is more easy to believe than that our long ago despised African brothers, now despised no longer, will reveal the meaning of their late-maturing, last-day gifts, their capacities of vision, and music, and song, and will let us hear the harps they carried in their bosom strike into play in the customary inspirations of religion? Their "word of the Lord," breaking into the old literature, will be like the prophet's word to the bones, and, for aught we know, will be darting along the wires of the world—bulletins of trade and diplomacy all still—as the freshest, newest news of the kingdom.

This appears, it may be, quite extravagant—extravagant enough to be weak—but we have it to say, that it is the genius of Christianity to work these grand inversions, and that we have, in this very singular people, just the qualities and seed-gifts which long ages of culture and piety may lift into a precedence of so great beauty. It is not said or expected with confidence, that so great honors are to be won by the race, or find their realization here in this country. They take their places here under great disadvantages, and their friends, doing all they can for them, will suffer many misgivings. What shall save them from their enemies? what from themselves? Perhaps they were allowed to be brought hither, that they might obtain conceptions of society and government for Africa; perhaps to open a way into the English tongue and its books, and so into the possibility of creating an Anglicized Africa. However it may be with them here, Africa, we suppose, will continue in its own sable color, and be covered in the course of ages with new and populous commonwealths. The nations that come first into history do not of course rise highest. The Babylonians and Egyptians and Persians had their day early; the Syrians, Carthaginians, Greeks, and Romans, came after, also to die. Then came along much later the German, Anglo-Saxon, Gallic races, all to reach a higher mark of power and civilization. Perhaps the Africans will come up late enough to be last, rising into great inspirations as their forerunners have into great wealth, and science, and heroism. The European nations are not likely to settle Africa, because of the climate—Africa must belong to the Africans. And it is right proper for them, if they may, to make it a last, new sphere of righteousness and peace; the best and most nearly divine it has been given to the world to see.

XV.

OF THE MUTABILITIES OF LIFE.

It is difficult to maintain as much sympathy as, perhaps, we ought, for that class of people who are always bewailing the mutability of earthly conditions. For the dark things they encounter so complainingly have their darkness, mainly, in the blind self-sympathy, that has shut away the manlier functions of intelligence. Indeed, we could hardly speak with patience of persons in this mood of affliction, were it not that sometimes very great and sudden changes do occur that are stunning surprises to everybody, and even throw the mind of the sufferer off its balance, for a time, by the tremendous shock they give it. What these may say, when the tempest is on them, and before the whirl of their brain is settled, will, of course, be pardoned. Still, generally, it is not such that are most apt to complain, or can not manage to receive the shock in silence, but it is the drooping, low-tempered, half-manly souls, that think they have a right to be afflicted, because the world refuses to keep such gait as they would have it. They find themselves at sea, though but a little way off the shore, and begin, before encountering any specially rough weather, to make a point of being sea-sick because of the element. Their difficulty is that they give way to their temperament, and let it keep them moping, or moaning, when a little more counsel taken of thought and reason would steady their vigor and keep them erect. They would no more pine over their changes, and have it, as the lamentable poetry of their life, to repeat—

"Naught may endure but mutability,"

but they would rather like the whirl of their vehicle, and even laugh at an occasional jolt in the passage. Of course they will be tried as we all are; bright promises will fade, friends will betray them, fortune will vanish, health will break, a great many troubles will overtake them, and a great many annoyances invade their peace; but if they have only some just opinion of life and of what is wanting in it, they will never take the mood of self-sympathy or dejection, as if some very strange thing had befallen them. They will even keep their feet the more stiffly because of their changes.

Now, the fatal omission of those who take the more dejected key, and are much in complaint respecting life's changes, is, that they have never made discovery and due account of the fact, that what we call mutability, apart from the fickleness of evil, is nothing but the law of motion, or mutation, as included in the necessary progress of motion. In other words, God has made us not simply to *be*, but to *move*, and by such motion get a way of transit through the course of discipline we want. And then, as the discipline comes, chapter after chapter, sometimes heavy, almost never such as we should choose for ourselves, it is to be our comfort, and a very considerable satisfaction besides, that we are on the move whither God sends us, and getting just the benefit he means to give us. In one view nothing is secure and abiding, just because nothing is made to be stationary. The present is transitory, the future uncertain, but not because God chooses, for some inscrutable reason, to put us sighing over the mutabilities. The question was between having something done here, and having nothing done; between having events coming out in progressions, and having neither events nor progressions; between giving us some benefit in life, and setting us up as pasteboard men in a painted world, to find no use or real meaning in it. What is much better than that, and exactly contrary, God has ordained motion for us, transit, and, what is but another name for the same thing, grand mutations that are all to be our lessons. If, then, life, as we say, is a river, and creation itself is a flood; if nothing really *is* to us but events or turnings out—changes that are always ending, never ended; if in this flood we live, and with it are borne along to the ocean; if the worlds can not stop rolling above us, or the winds settle round us; if our body is itself a river of circulation, flowing away and replacing itself every year; if one generation goeth and another cometh, all battling their way forward, wearing and worn, till their work is done; and then, if all this outward transition is but shaping and writing out a soul-history correspondent, changing the sky of the mind within, and setting it onward—feeling, fancy, hope, will, all the myrmidon powers that play the phases of experience—through doings and comings-to-pass, that are seas of mutabilities within, but are steadily shaping, and meant to shape a character: if this, I say, is the motion God ordains, what better can we do than to bravely consent to it, and take the mutabilities, one and all, save the mutabilities of evil, in glad, strong welcome?

No one fails to observe the general going on of the creation—the seasons, day and night, the moons, the tides, the breathings, the heart-beats, the soul itself not able to cease thinking when it sleeps—even as if the universal order were a clock, running to keep time; but it is not seen as distinctly as it might be, that innumerable, ever-progressing mutabilities are involved in it. Not a thing can be to-day where it was yesterday; the past is vanishing, the future is coming, and it can not be that many things we value and cling to will not, in one way or another, go by even as we go ourselves. Property, friends, expectations, foundations—every thing we value—is in transit; and if it does not wholly go by at some particular minute, it will change color, fall into new relations, and be so far modified that we can hardly think it the same. In this general economy of motion it is impossible that the changes should not sometimes take us off our feet, or crowd us to the wall; and it will be none the worse, or any thing to put us whimpering or complaining, if they do. New chapters are wanted, and if the last new chapter is different from the one preceding, it will probably be all the better that it is. To be thrust out of fortune, or thrust into misfortune, is no so prodigious calamity, save where the man is weak; and then the misfortune is probably just the thing that is needed to put a little strength into his weakness. But if he gets heart-sick easily, and sinks into the condoling and complaining mood, he can not be said to be unmanned by it, for in fact he only was not manned before.

I wish it were also possible for these afflicted people who are so easily disturbed and made anxious by the little mutations or seeming losses of their life, to see how intolerable their condition would be if they were, in fact, glued fast in a motionless position, and compelled to simply stay. After awhile they would begin to sigh for some kind of relief from the tedium of their immobility. Only let there be some stir, they would say; let this dreary monotony take in something to give a sense of change. What we call fortune gets to be a bore, if it brings no changes, but merely keeps up for us the stale rounds of comfort—the dress, the house, the furniture; the same table, and tax-bill, and grocer's bill; the same coach and the same driver, and the same dull-looking, stereotyped faces, called our friends. We want something to change color. It would even be a relief to lose something; to be less fully supplied, and get a new motive for economy; no matter if it be a little more anxious economy, or more nearly pinched with want. To have only made a bad indorsement, and lost one's means by it, is better, a great deal, than to have the fixity of a stone. To get no sense of motion, no stage of transit, is inexpressibly wearisome And it will not do to be delicate as to the kind of transit we are to have. If it is not pleasant or agreeable, it is not half as unpleasant or disagreeable as none atall would be. Even passing out of a good and losing it is better than to be a petrifaction in it, or to have it petrified about us. What kind of time would plants have, in the most splendid herbarium in the world, if only a very little sense and vitality were left in them, when so booked?

But a great many of the mutabilities we complain of, it will be remembered, are occasioned by the wrongs that rob, or sting, or betray us. Even so, and we have it as a right, of course, to be dissatisfied with the wrongdoers, and deeply feel the injury we suffer from them. The insecurities, instabilities, and dark adversities of life, are largely due to perfidies and frauds in this manner. Simply to lose confidence in a friend is enough, sometimes, to change the whole cast of our condition—the revelation discovered takes away our expectation, eclipses the bright point of life, and changes the very color of the world. And we shall not feel it the less when it strips us of our property, breaks our credit, or invents insidious attacks on our good name. Still, even here, the mere changes we suffer, apart from their causes, ought not to be any so great part of our affliction. The changes may be only great moral advantages to us, pushing us on to higher points of character than we could otherwise reach. As men judge, the being stripped of one's property is a very great and sore calamity; and yet, how many have been really created by it, in all that constitutes their noblest manhood! how many families that were going to be only pampered and softened by the condition of ease it gave them, girded to a manly habit and a grand overmastering energy, which gives them a significance to themselves otherwise never to be attained! If they had been thus stripped by lightning, and not by human wrong, the change itself would have been the same, and perhaps they will get a very great additional advantage when it has been done by wrong, in the fact that it gives them a more wary apprehension of what may be looked for in mankind, and sets them in a closer way of exactness themselves, as regards the keeping of their integrity. An over-implicit or over-facile trust in men is a very great practical weakness, and many can afford to be cured of it at almost any cost. It begets, in fact, a *moral* weakness, that offers itself to be preyed on by every sort of cunning or bad association. All evil is perfidy at bottom, and we can not be too soon aware that some kind of perfidy is always likely to be working in it. All the worse sign is it for us, when defrauded or betrayed by wrong, to shut our eyes, instead of letting them be opened, and fall to moaning over the sad uncertainties and mutabilities of earthly things. All such dreary sentimentalizing is weakness. How much better to remember that, if we have been troubled and thrown out of condition by others, we have not been by any fault of honor and truth, or any sort of vice, in ourselves. In that noble consciousness it ought to be much that we can firmly rest.

Thus far we deal with only the minor and subordinate conditions of the subject, such as lie more nearly in the common field of thought and observation concerning it; the principal matter still remains.

What we have been saying of motion, transition, progression, and shifting discipline of experience, needed for the consolidation of character, is true, and the moral uses of the instabilities or mutabilities of time are sufficiently evident, even if we look no further. But there is another kind of use, or class of uses, which is deeper and more nearly fundamental, growing out of the relations of these mutable conditions to a future condition both immutable and immortal. We are put to sea, we shall find, in the mutable, that we may reach the immutable, which is only a true version of the immortal. There is a very close connection, as will thus appear, between the dark and lowering instabilities we so much complain of, and so resolutely fight against, and the idea discovered of our immortality; between it also, and the practical bent of our life in that direction.

1. These mutabilities give us the idea, and so the accepted and established fact of immortality. Let us see if we can trace the manner of the process.

Nothing is more commonly observed than the immense eagerness of mankind to get away from the mutations, or above the mutabilities, of their mortal condition. Not less observable is the unregulated sensibility by which the less resolute, less firmly tempered souls are so piteously distressed, when their seeming foundations begin to be shaken or shattered by some kind of disaster. And the true explanation is, that every moral nature has belongings to a state that is really above mutation; so that when it casts off the bond, or forgets the grand affinities that should fasten it there, it is turned to look after some kind of anchorage in the mutable that will answer its want. Hence the panic we suffer in our losses; hence the indefatigable industries and the prodigiously strenuous works that engage us. The zest, the passion, the infatuation, we may almost say, of our endeavor is, to so far get above causes, or get the command of causes, as to fix or fasten our own future. And the pitch of tension to which we are often raised in this endeavor is even frightful—as if the strain of it must sometime snap the cords of life itself. And then we make up our account of the fact, by saying that man pursues the mortal with the zeal of a nature immortal. In which we are right, only we do not perceive as distinctly as we might, that this fact of immortality is a fact that gets both its evidence and enforcement, at the precise point of antagonism between the mutable and the immutable. The real first question is not immortality, as we commonly assume, but immutability; for the sense of our everduringness comes through no speculation about the matter of dateless continuance, but through what germinations we have in us, and what experiences we get, of the immutable. It is morally and not speculatively pronounced in us. As a mere opinion, or intellectually discovered fact, it is nothing. No argument of that kind ever made the smallest approach to proving it. But the grand mutation element in which we live is continually heaving us upon it, and compelling us to have it as in fact, whether we have it as in opinion or not. We have no thought of immortality, it may be, but only of something to be gotten out of the mutable that shall be as good as immutable; some provisioning of a perfectly sure state, such as no mischances and changes can overset or shake. In these prodigious throes of endeavor that keep the world astir, we are scorning the mutabilities and pressing toward the changeless. Our effort is absurd, as being in the plane of mere temporalities, but it proves our want of the immutable, and so our immortal capacity. Having a nature packed full of possibilities and fore-reaching affinities for a morally immutable condition, we are thus tremendously moved by aspirations toward it after it is lost. Seeing every thing in transit about us, we still go on to build the untransitory in it, moaning feebly when it seems to be sliding from under us, or striving, in all hugest endeavor, to fasten a foundation that can not slide. And the result is that our mutabilities, of which we so often complain, are proving always the sublimity of their uses, by crowding us toward the immutable state we do not even dare to think of, and the immortal state we think of, but can only faintly believe.

We exist here in a double connection; first, with the transitory on one side, and, secondly, with the untransitory on the other; and we fare, as many other creatures do that are made for two distinct elements, coming into distress in one element, the moment they lose connection with the other. The sponge, for example, gets its food and life from the fluid, ever-moving waters of the sea ; but it must be also fastened to some rock that does not move, and gives firm anchorage to it in the waters. And then, if by any mischance it is detached from its hold, it floats away, driven loosely by the unstable element, and is actually drowned by the very waters that were to give it feeding and maintain its growth. The bird has wings connecting it with the air, and feet on which it takes the ground for rest, or settles in firm hold on its perch for the sleep of the night. But if it wanders too far seaward on its fickle elements, or is driven wildly out by the tempest, it gets bewildered, and settles weary and heart-sick on the deck of some ship espied from afar, submitting to be taken by the hands. Trees get their feeding largely from the air and the light, in which their foliage so receptively spreads itself, and their limbs so gracefully play. But they must have their roots also taking firm hold of the ground, by these to be localized and kept erect and steady in the storms. And when the changing season tinges them in sad colors above, and finally strips them bare, they so far seem to even die; only holding fast their clinch upon the frozen earth with their numbed, icy fingers—even as a diver holds his breath in the water—till the summer light and heat return to quicken their life. By these and other like feeble analogies we conceive the double state of man, connected on one side with infinite mutabilities in things, and on the other with immutable ideas and truths and God; so that if he undertakes to get on apart from these latter, to be fed on the transitory, established in the ficklenesses, or to get firm footing in the cloudland of weather and storm, he must do what neither sponge, nor bird, nor tree was ever able—make the transitory constant, and the mutable as good and sure as the immovable.

But we must have a closer and more critical inspection of this matter. Immutability is a character that is commonly reserved for God, as being his exclusive right or possibility; and there may even seem to be some want of reverence in the supposition that it can at all belong to man as a human attainment. That depends entirely on the question whether God's immutability is grounded in his quantities, or in his principles. If it is grounded in his quantities, like his omniscience or omnipotence, and belongs in that way to his infinite magnitudes, then, of course, it is impossible for any creature. If it is grounded in his principles, if it is a moral and no mere natural attribute, then it may belong as well to any creature who can be established in the same principles; the very object of his training, too, may be to get him thus established. And when this is done, when he is gotten forever above temptation, clear of mental swervings or mutations, he is morally immutable. His integrity is perfect never, till it becomes immutability. Meantime, it will be difficult to find how God's mere quantities should make him immutable without principles, or a state of moral fixity in them; quite as difficult to find how the same fixity in the same principles should fail to make his creature immutable, for mere defect of quantity.

It less easily occurs to us to think of immutability, as a character belonging to man, that he is visibly and consciously so far off, and so confusedly mixed with all the mutations of time. He is temptable in his best condition, so far mutable, and it is well if he does not show it by a good deal of sadly mutable practice. And yet it should not be incredible that he may have found his bearing in principles that do not change, in God who is forever as to-day, and so far has gotten the sure presentiment and germ of a perfectly unchanging character, finally to be consummated.

I think it likely, too, that the proposing of any such ideal for man's attainment will be scarcely welcome to many. They will think of the immutable state as a kind of imprisonment, or stale monotony, where liberties are gone by, progressions ended, varieties excluded. When the mutations are all over, what will be left them, but to simply be falling into just that state we have described of insupportable tedium, that will make any kind of motion, or change, a relief. Whereas the supposed imprisonment will only be a state of fixity in principles, which principles will be themselves guaranties of unchanging liberty and progression, instigators of all highest action, fountains of all grandest mutations and varieties not evil, laws of eternally right motion. Nothing is excluded but the bad motions and double-minded caprices of a nature, warping and warped, swerving and swerved, under evil. Evil excluded and gone, immutability is everywhere.

Let us see, then, from the inventory of man's gifts, by what furniture and outfit he is equipped for any such transcendent character. First, we have the fact, that certain great moral ideas, which are immutable and eternal, belong inherently to his moral nature itself, and assert their standard authority in it. To be a man is to think them, and not to think them is to be merely an animal; all men do in fact think them exactly alike. And when they bind, they bind us all alike. They are necessary and absolute. They can not be less or different; rejected they stand, violated they are whole. In their own nature immutable, they assume the right to govern all mind, and whatever mind receives them so far passes out of the mutable.

Take, for example, the truth-principle, the necessary, everlasting, ideal distinction between the true and the false. It can as little be debated, in a way of opinion, as the idea of space: it is absolute. If now any moral being accept this truth-principle, to live for the truth and by it, he becomes a principled man as regards all truth, in distinction from an unprincipled, or non-principled man. He is not settled, of course, in the knowledge of all particular truths. He may err a long time in opinions, or matters of fact; but being in the truth-principle, sworn to seek, and serve, and live and die for, the truth, he is polarized in that principle, and will settle his vibrations closer and closer, in all his discriminations, determinations, and faiths. Being fixed in the principle of truth-seeking, he is just so far a true man; whereas there are multitudes of men, it may be, holding vastly more true judgments and opinions and fewer errors than he, who are yet only governed by the market, or the school, or the church, and are really not true men at all, because there is no immutable first principle in them of devotion to the truth for truth's sake. They are clocks set by all other clocks, and not dials set for the sun.

Exactly the same thing holds, in exactly the same manner, as respects the absolute, necessary, ideal distinction of right and wrong. And the truly right man is not he that does prevailingly right things, according to the *mos* or common law moral of society, but he that takes the principle of right-doing to follow it implicitly, at any cost, and even when it puts him against society itself. All the repentances, sacrifices, and martyrdoms begin here, at the point of immutable right; but there are thousands of men who will be offended when they are not admitted to be properly righteous, who never took the ordeal of right-principle, to stand or fall with it, in their lives. All the right doings in which they please themselves are deferences to custom in the mutable, never to the all-dominating sovereignty of right itself—immutable, everlasting right. This whole side of their moral nature, where its affinities are to prove their sublimity by conducting them inward where God's own immutability rests, is ignored. They are virtuous men as far as the whiffling element of what the world calls virtue makes them so, but the everlastingness of absolute right they know nothing of.

The same is true as regards the more strictly religious, inborn relations of the soul with God. When it turns itself to God, it is not as when it came to its own moral ideas simply, but it comes to a being other than itself, before and over against itself. It is *being* trusting itself to *being*, finite being to infinite being, in that also to be complemented and, as it were, infinited with it. Whereupon, as God is himself a nature supreme above all force or change by force, it gets the sense of touching bottom in the changeless. No man really believes in God, as in practical trust, in distinction from only believing some propositional matter concerning him, without having God verified to him as by consciousness —substance in substance—and then he will as certainly be fixed in the sense of his own ever-duringness; which ever-duringness is not the opinion, reasoned or gotten up, of his own immortality, but the sense, in fact, of being down upon, in and of the immutable.

We perceive, in this manner, that the immutable is not as far off from our human nature as we commonly think; that our moral ideas and religious affinities stock us, so to speak, for the attainment, and that just here all our convictions of immortality get their spring. Immortality is nothing but the fact translated of immutable morality. We are so bound up with eternal ideas and God, that we have the fact of immortality by moral impression. Feeding, or prepared to feed, on the eternal and immutable, feeling it stir within us evermore, we need not ask for it, or go after it to fetch it by wise argumentations; we have its certifying touch already felt in our consciousness. Besides, these mutabilities in which our lives are mixed are turning us ever about, and driving us on, and crowding us in, where, in trying to get hold of the changeless, the changeless in a higher key gets hold of us. And we so begin to think our immortality as a fact of the understanding, because it is already upon us in power, in moral impressions back of the understanding. What we last and least imagine, the candidacy of our moral nature for the immutable becomes an awakened sense of it, which sense emerges, and takes form in thought or opinion, as a mentally discovered fact of immortality. Hence it is that we so readily believe it as a truth, when we make so poor a figure in maintaining it. We reason it from the immateriality of the soul; or from the great powers of mind, so scantily developed in this life; or from our unwillingness to cease and be no more; or from any worst, or best, of fifty other kinds of premise; but the short account of the matter is, that nature is beforehand with us, commanding us, so to speak, into immortality; commanding us, that is, into and by everlasting, absolute principles, even the same which anchor God's immutability itself; and, what is more, commanding us home to God's own infinite nature, there to be complemented in his ever-during sufficiency. Nature scorns, in this manner, all the speculative arguments, and puts it on us, going directly by both theologians and skeptics, to know our immortality, as we know the face of duty, or of God. What they teach, or reason, is a matter of comparatively small consequence, because the fact is already out, asking neither help nor consent from them. We pass now—

2. To the more advanced position or use already suggested, viz., the fact that our instabilities, or mutable conditions, not only discover to us our inherently immortal nature, but so work upon us as to bend us practically toward the immortal state, as the only sufficiently wise end or satisfactory consummation of our life.

We are set on thus, practically, toward the condition of immutability by two kinds of impulse from the mutable state, a negative and a positive acting concurrently. In the negative we have it discovered to us, that there is and can be no such reliable basis of expectation as we try for in things, and before coming into principles. Nothing short of immutability, whether we so think or not, really meets our want, and this we strike nowhere, save in the everlasting principles of duty, and the divine anticipations of religion. Whether it was possible to give a more reliable, and less fluctuating, billowy character to mere things, I do not know; but if it was, I think we can see that we profoundly want just all the transitional, unsteady elements we have. There plainly must not only be motion, or transit, but there must be surprises, incalculable somersets, infinite unreliabilities—all that we include in our weakest sighs of surrender, and stoutest wars of defiance to the fickleness of fortune—else we shall be only losing all the benefits of living, by rooting ourselves down into the crevices of things, as trees in the clefts of the rocks, thinking so to get firm enough foothold in time.

Hence the almost visibly contrived instabilities of the world; as if it were God's purpose to let every good of time shake us out of its lap. Reputation—what is it but a phantom that we are more likely to be anxious for, than to have by a secure title? Friends are not angels, and too often prove that they are more wisely suspected than trusted. Money—where shall we place it? The safe is not safe enough. The bank is scarcely better. The public securities are most insecure in the keeping. Short notes have wings that are long enough to fly away. Stocks are sometimes only wings without a body. Mortgages must be clear of liens going before, and fires and collapses of value coming after. Executors, guardians, agents, who can tell what breaches of trust they are concocting? So that no kind of footing, or property, or benefit of condition obtained, is sufficiently clear of risk to be entirely reliable. Unlooked for mischances will come, and a dozen mischances coming together will put their victim in a strait he never expected to see. Or suppose a man too firmly grounded in his wealth to be disturbed by any such combination of mischances, he is yet subject to other kinds of mischances, that will make his life more baseless and frail than any mere collapse in property. A profligate son, a daughter badly married, a wife hopelessly insane, secreted in a hospital to die—any one, or all these together, show him how completely subject he still is to the mutabilities of time. Or, it may be that he only suffers that most common of mortal disasters, the loss of his health, and when that goes, how incontinently vanish the delights of the senses, the joys of motion, the zests of enterprise; and from that point onward the poor man, laden with so heavy spoils of fortune, is like a mule dragging in deep sands and getting no foothold. There is also a grand mischance, or king of mischances, whose shadow, riding by, we often think we see, and the touch of whose fell finger, we know, sends us quickly away. Our very world-element, in short, is fickleness, and if we try to make it firm by the firm hold we put on it, straws are only straws, though we clutch them ever so tightly.

There is very little use in sentimentalizing, or moping in sad complaints, over these fugacious, baseless things in which we have our experience. They are all very soberly meant, very deliberately planned for us. If God could have made things stand more securely, as we are apt to believe, he certainly has not done it, and has not for the wisest and best reasons. We could not plainly be trained for immortality in a time-element that is itself as good and reliable as immortality. It must not be as good and reliable, else we shall contrive to stay in it. If we are to let go of it and rise to something higher, we must see it to be hollow, treacherous, uncertain, unreliable, insufficient, and then we are so far clear of it, or even exclusively thrust forward by it.

But this mutable element is more than negatively good, as regards the choice of ends that belong to the immortal state; it works negatively that it may work positively, and exert a really introductive power. The changes we are passing, hour by hour, are all before the open gate of principle, showing us in, raising also wants to draw us in. Wants are wonderfully perceptive; and the royal base-work of immutable order and rest, prepared in their nature itself, many will never find, till their ponderous wants, somehow developed, settle them down upon it. Hence also the mutabilities. God puts us at sea in them that we may get tired of them. It is not altogether ill to be at sea. The fire-gleams of the night, the mirages of the day, the sea-storm voice—deepest of all voices—the sceneries of the weather, the pomps of the waves, make up a world by themselves; but the painful thing is, and it is more and more felt, and grows more and more wearisome, that there is no fixity, nothing but change, the very feet grow sick of it, aching, if but for a single hour, to get the touch of some foundation. The plays of change that, for a time, were interesting, grow dull and stale and dreary, and the wonder is, at last, that so many fine things came to pass in the beginning of the voyage, and none at all now. Finally, if the voyage is a long one, or the ship gets disabled, the simple word *shore* comes to have a kind of paradise in it. When shall it be seen? Shall it ever be seen? Why not put ourselves to the oars and try for it? Just so it is that men get weary and sick in the mutabilities. And it does not make much difference, whether they suffer losses, or get on by successes; for they have about the same sense of insecurity or unsteadiness in one, that they have in the other, and get sick and hungry in about the same degree. Only there are some who will never get away from things far enough to embrace principles, till some final sweep of calamity strips all things away; never come unto God, till, by some great storm, they are virtually wrecked on him. Then for the first time, when they touch him, so to speak, with their feet, and rest on him, do they begin to know what a coming to land it is to trust him. All true-born souls are brought ashore in this manner, on the continental principles of duty and religion. What we call the world-element, unsteady and mutable as the sea, is no finality for them, but they are put in it, as a merely transitional chapter, to be inducted, and pressed inward, and downward, upon real foundations—the immutable, the immortal.

It is also a very great positive benefit, in this schooling of the mutable state, that it gives us the fact of immortality, not as a speculation, but as a grand, overtowering moral impression. We take it up because everlasting principles are heaving in us. Our sense of God contains it, and gives it a wide, warm bosom. Let a human creature reason out some wise conclusion of the head in this matter, and project his mole-eye sight far enough into words to fetch eternities out of them, and then, having got his wise opinion set in the conclusion that he is certainly immortal, let him put himself to the use of it, and see how much, or little rather, it will mean. It will be such a flickering light, such a feeble and cold moonshine out of eternity, as to engage no earnest feeling, carry no strong impulse. These speculated notions of immortality are, in fact, often a hinderance and no help. Whereas the immortality that has come out through the gate of immutable mortality, that which has thundered in the soul's moral ideas and affinities for God, that which, coming before all speculation, has raised the plane of the man, and made him a superior creature, will have a glorious, almost glorifying power. It has a positive moral meaning, next akin to the sense of immutability itself, though probably never so conceived, and the soul hastens longingly toward it, as its continental Rest and Home.

Besides, this morally felt immortality will be always waking to consciousness those moral wants and convictions that are closest to the standards of duty and religion. There is no exactly fit relation between mere world-sickness and a morally right life. It might about as well be expected that a man will make that kind of choice because he is work-sick or weary. There must be some moral quality in the want developed, else it has no relation to such a result. But this moral quality will here seldom be wanting. There is such close company in souls between the want of stability and the principles that are to make it, that whoever gets weary and sick of the mutabilities can, with difficulty, exclude some pungent reflections on the neglect of those principles. It is possible, I grant, for a man to be crushed in his expectations, stripped by losses, broken down by defeats, or, in a career of general success, to be utterly disgusted with the chaffy look of his gains, and yet to encounter no reflections on the moral significance of what he suffers. But there will be few such cases, and it will at least sometimes be seen, that men who are at the highest strain of their powers, and fighting in stoutest throes of endeavor, to conquer a reliable footing for their life, just there discover, and by that very means, the practical nonsense and wrong of their wild instigations; that they are straining after foundations where there are none, and neglecting them where they are—this, too, because they are principles of duty and religion; such as have a right, in their own divine order, to be first accepted and acted from, and be themselves the footing of the life. Thoughts of this kind are never far off from the man who is delving, heart-sick and wearily, among the mutabilities, and he will not always be in a mood to repel them. He is far more likely to say, "I have been a fool and a prodigal. I forsook my Father—evil was the day—and now I will arise and go to my Father." No man ever really embraces a principle that has been deserted without some contrition felt for the desertion of it. And there is a wonderful fitness in the incertitudes and circumgyrations of our mortal affairs, to bring us round, where the eternal love and order have their rest, with wills effectually tamed by self-discovery. They are a kind of sermon that all men hear at times, and they have it as their peculiar advantage, that they preach conviction out, so to speak, instead of preaching it in, and do it by a kind of power that wakens no jealousy.

On the whole it will be seen, that what we call the baselessness of the world, and speak of with so little respect, is a really grand institution, adjusted for our moral benefit. If the light whifflings of its changes, the heavy and grim overturnings, the everywhere unsteady footings, put us all at sea, there is yet a continent hard by—principles immutable, and immutability in principles. Human nature nowhere looks so great, capable of a footing so divinely solid and strong, as in precisely these contrived environments of change—pressing, all together, landward, and drawing us on, by their ceaseless mutations toward a base that is changeless.

XVI.

OF THE SEA.

Had it been given us to compose or settle the proportions of the world, there is probably no particular in which we should have differed the scheme of it more widely from the present, or now existing scheme, than in not allowing any so great amount of surface to be covered with water. It would not even occur to us that so many, vast, outspreading seas and oceans—unfruitful, inhospitable, next to impassable—could have any fit place or use. Is it not a world for man to inhabit? and is he not a creature wanting chiefly land—a soil to cultivate, a firm foundation to build upon, a steady footing of reaction for his works? Allowing a large supply for his economic uses, who can imagine that only oceans of waters will suffice? And what can he do with waters that are only brine, covering four-fifths, or nine-tenths of the world? Having it on hand to raise the best conditioned and most numerous possible herd of men, we should always be contriving how to enlarge the pasture. Instead of these immense water-deserts we should be laying out for as many and productive acres of land as possible. We should make the globe itself a good round ball of meadow and plowland.

The leviathans would have to make room for the reapers, and if we could find how to keep the ground in good and safe drainage without seas, we should allow but one great floor of continent wrapping about the world; which floor should be carpeted, in close order, with great flourishing empires.

This would be our wisdom—God's how different! By him these great oceans are excavated, and the habitable parts are islanded in narrow strips between them. It is as if he were planning vast regions of waste, that he may stint the fruitfulness, and set a bound to the populousness of his realms. The natural philosopher and man of science will doubtless have another account to give; showing how the physical uses—the comforts, supplies, and populative capabilities of the world—depend on having just so large a portion of the land submerged. The sea, as he will represent, tempers the climate of the land, making the heat less intense and the cold less rigorous. It supplies, too, the rains that water the land and make it fruitful; furnishing also immense stores of provisions from its own pastures. All which may be true; though it does not follow that the same results could not have been accomplished in some other way. Mere physical uses or ends are never the final causes of things, and it will be difficult to imagine that, if God had been planning for the particular uses here specified—viz., how to provide the largest and best supplies for a great population—he could not have widened vastly the spaces of land and made them tenfold more productive. We recollect here that God's last ends are always moral ends, and we seem therefore to see that, in this vast overspreading of seas, he is preparing the world, not so much for a physical, as for a moral habitation. And he seems, in this view, to be rather preferring to limit, than to extend the populations provided for; lest our school of virtue may be too large and too easily kept in supply, for the intended moral benefit. So he makes small the globe by reductions of the existing spaces, narrowing down our field, not by the seas alone, but by rigors of frost, and deserts of sand, and mountains of rock; as if meaning to bring us into compass or compression, and set us in a discipline of toil and hardship for the due unfolding of our personal force, and the right establishing of our character. His fundamental assumption appears to be that, to such a being as man, virtue can be only a conquest.

Prepared by considerations like these, we are now ready for the more deliberate inquiry, what are the moral uses of the sea, or in what respects does it appear to have been appointed for the moral benefit of the world? And I think it will appear, as we prosecute this inquiry, that the ordinance of the sea is so thoroughly interwoven with all that is of the highest interest to man—the progress of society, art, government, science, and religion; in a word, all that is included in moral advancement—that, without the sea, the world could hardly be considered a fit habitation for his use.

One great problem of God, in building a school for man, was, how to distribute the school; for it is manifest that no one government, or society, could fill and occupy the whole domain—certainly not, without producing indefinite confusion, and sacrificing many of the most powerful stimulants to energy and advancement. Neither could it be done, without exalting the throne or governing power to such a pitch of eminence as would probably command the religious homage of mankind, and make it the head of a universal Lamaism. But if the world is to be distributed into nations, or kingdoms —which are likely to be always jealous of each other and sometimes hostile—they need to be separated by natural barriers, such as will prevent strife by inclosing them within definite boundaries, and, when they are in actual strife, will fortify them against destruction one from the other. This is effected, in part, by interposing mountains and rivers, but more effectually, and on a larger scale, by spreading seas and oceans between them. For there is, in fact, no maxim of the poets, often cited, more utterly destitute of foundation, or more unjust to Providence, than Cowper's well-meant lines:—

"Mountains interposed
Make enemies of nations, who had else,
Like kindred drops, been mingled into one;"

for mountains are the well defined boundaries, rather, and pacificators of nations. Oceans and great bodies of water have the still further advantage, that they can be passed more easily for purposes of convenience than for those of destruction. Indeed, it is impossible for whole nations to pour their military hordes across them, as across a mere geographical line. Nature is here the grand distributor and fortifier of nations. She draws her circle of waters, not around some castle or fortified citadel of art, but around whole nations themselves. Then it is within these fortified circles of nature, that nations are to unfold their power and have their advancement. Such was Greece, cut off from all the world by boundaries of rock and water, which no Xerxes with his invading army could effectually pass; having, at the same time, enough of strife and struggle within to keep her on the alert, and waken all her powers to vigorous exercise. Such is England now. England, for so many ages past the foremost light of Europe, the bulwark of law, the great temple of religion, could never have been what it is, or any thing but the skirt of some nation comparatively undistinguished, had not the Almighty drawn his circle of waters around it, and girded it with strength, to be the right hand of his power. It is the boundaries of nations, too, that give them locality and settle those historic associations which are the conscious life of society and the source of all great and high emotions; otherwise they fly to perpetual vagrancy and dissipation—there is no settlement, no sense of place or compression, and, as nothing takes root, nothing grows. Thus the ancient Scythian, roaming over the vast levels of the North, is succeeded by the modern Tartar—both equally wild and uncultivated, the father of three thousand years ago and the son of to-day.

Again it will be found that the oceans and seas have sometimes contributed, beyond all power of estimation, to the moral and social advancement of the race, by separating one part of the world even from the knowledge of another, and preserving it for discovery and occupation at an advanced period of history. Had the territory of the United States been conjoined to the eastern shore of Asia, or the western of Europe, or had there been no oceans interposed to break the continuous circle of land, it is obvious that the old and worn-out forms of civilization would have wanted a spur to reform and improvement that is now supplied. When, at length, the new world was discovered, then were the race called out, as it were, to begin again. The trammels of ancient society and custom, which no mere human power could burst, were burst by the fiat of Providence, and man went forth to try his fortunes once more, carrying with him all the advantages of a previous experience. We set up here no invidious claim of precedence. We acknowledge our rawness and obscurity, in comparison with the splendor and high refinement of more ancient nations. We only claim it as our good fortune that we are a new nation, peopled by men of a new world, who had new principles to be tested, for the common benefit of mankind. As such the eye of the world is upon us, and has been for many years. The great thought of our institutions—the happiness and elevation of the individual man—is gradually and silently working its way into all the old fabrics of legitimacy in Christendom, and compelling the homage of power in all its high places. Whatever motion there has been in European affairs for the last half century—all the mitigations of law, the dynasties subverted, the constitutions conceded, the enlarged liberty of conscience and the press, popular education, every thing that goes to make society beneficent—has been instigated, more or less directly, by the great idea that is embodied and represented in the institutions of the United States. This same great idea, the well-being and character of the individual man, has been brought forth, too, to offer itself to the world, at just the right time. Without it, we may well doubt whether the institutions of Europe had not come to their limit, beyond which they had not, in themselves, any power of advancement. Had it come earlier, Europe was not ready for it. The immense advantage that is thus to accrue to mankind, as regards the great interests of truth, society, and religious virtue, from the fact that our western hemisphere was kept hidden for so many ages beyond an impassable ocean, to be opened, in due time, for the planting and propagation of new ideas, otherwise destined to perish, no mind can estimate. Nor is this process of planting yet exhausted. There are islands in the southern oceans larger than England, that are yet to become seats of power and of empire, and possibly to shine as lights of Antarctic history eclipsing those of the North; or, if not eclipsing, giving to all the northern climes, both of the eastern and western worlds, the experiment of new principles needful to their progress and happiness.

But it is another and yet more impressive view of the moral utility of seas and oceans, that, while they have a disconnecting power operating in the ways first specified, they have at the same time a connecting power, bringing all regions and climes into correspondence and commercial interchange. Fortified by oceans and seas against injury from each other, they are yet united by the same for purposes of mutual benefit. Were there no seas, were the globe covered by a continuous sheet of land, how different the history of the past from what it has been! how different the moral and intellectual state of human society from what it now is! There being no medium of commerce, save that of land travel, no intercourse could exist between nations remote from each other. They would know each other only by a kind of tradition, as now we know the past. Tradition, too, in its long and uncertain transit across the longitude of the world, would clothe itself in fable, and we, instead of being made to feel the common brotherhood of man as now, should probably be fast in the belief that the opposite hemisphere of the world is peopled by giants, centaurs, anthropophagi, and such like fabulous monsters. There would, of course, be no commerce, except between nations that are adjacent; and society, being life without motion or stimulus, would rot itself down into irredeemable bigotry and decrepitude. God would not have it so. On the ocean, which is the broad public highway of the Almighty, nations pass and repass, visit and revisit each other, and those which are remote as freely as those which are near. And it is this fluid element that gives fluidity and progress to the institutions and opinions of the race.

It is only in the great inland regions of the world, as in Central Africa and Asia, that bigotry and inveterate custom have their seat. In these vast regions that never saw the sea, regions remote from the visits of commerce and the moving world, men have lived from age to age without progress, or the idea of progress, crushed under their despotisms, held fast in the chains of indomitable superstition, rooted down like their trees, and motionless as their mountains. In the mean time, the shores and islands of the world have felt the pulse of human society, and yielded themselves to progress. It is, in a word, this fluid sea, on whose bosom the free winds of heaven are wafting the world's commerce, which represents all mobility and progress in the human state. Without this interposed, the rock-based continents themselves were not more fixed than the habits and opinions of mankind. On the other hand, we observe that the prejudices of men who live upon and by the waters are never invincible. They admit of change, somewhat by habit and association, as their element changes, and they shift their sail to the winds. It was never a Babylon, or a Timbuctoo, or any city of the inland regions, that was forward to change and improvement. But it was a Tyre, queen of the sea; a Carthage, sending out her ships, beyond the Pillars of Hercules, to Britain and the Northern Isles; an Athens, an Alexandria—these were the seats of art, and thought, and learning, and liberal improvement of every sort. So, too, it was the Italian commercial cities that broke up the dark ages, and gave the modern nations that impulse which set them forward in their career of art and social refinement, and, remotely speaking, of liberty.

The spirit of commerce, too, is the spirit of peace, its interest the interest of peace, and peace is the element of all moral progress, as war is the element of all barbarism and desolation. Every ship that sails the ocean is a pledge for peace to the extent of its value; every sail a more appropriate symbol of peace than the olive-branch itself. Commerce, too, has at length changed the relative position of nations. Once upon a footing of barbarism, they are now placed on a footing of friendship and civilization. In the most splendid days of Athens, piracy was a trade, not a crime; for it was the opinion that nations were naturally hostile, and will, of course, prey upon each other. But now, at length, commerce has created for itself a great system of international and commercial law, which, to a certain extent, makes one empire of all the nations, maintaining the rights of person and property, when abroad upon the ocean, or in other lands, as carefully and efficiently as if there were but one nation or people on the globe. Search the history of man, from the beginning till now, you will find among all the arts, inventions and institutions of the race, no one so beneficent, none that reveals so broad a stride of progress, as this. And it promises yet to go on, extending its sway, till it has given rules to all the conduct of nations, provided redress for all injuries, and thus lawed out forever all war from the earth.

The nations engaged in commerce will, of course be most rapidly improved, and become the most forward nations. In perpetual intercourse with each other, they will ever be adopting the inventions, copying the good institutions, and rectifying the opinions, one of another; for the man of commerce is never a bigot. He goes to buy, in other nations, commodities that are wanted in his own. He is, therefore, in the habit of valuing what is valuable in other countries, and so, proportionally, is the people or nation that consumes the commodities of other countries. And so much is there in this, that the government, the literature, nay, even the religion of every civilized nation, must receive a modifying influence from all the nations with whom it maintains an active commerce. In opinions, literature, arts, laws—nay, in every thing—they must gradually approximate, till they coalesce, at last, in one and the same catholic standard of value and excellence. Commerce is itself catholic, and it seems to be the sublime purpose of God, in its appointment, to make every thing else so, that as all are of one blood, so, at last, they shall be one conscious brotherhood.

In the mean time, the nations most forward in art and civilization are approaching, by the almost omnipresent commerce they maintain, all the rude and barbarous nations of the world, carrying with them, wherever they go, all the tokens of precedence by which these nations may be most impressed with a sense of their backwardness, and set forward in a career of improvement. They need only be visited by the ships, or especially the steam-vessels, of European commerce, to see that they are in their childhood, and there must remain, except as they adopt the science and the institutions of European nations. What, consequently, do we behold? Not the wilds of Northern Russia only, not the islands only of the sea becoming emulous of European laws and arts and manners; but the throne of Siam inquiring after the methods and truths of the West; all British India studying English, in a sense more real than the study of words; Muscat sending over to examine and copy our arts; both branches of the Mohammedan empire receiving freely, and carefully protecting Christian travelers, and adopting, as fast as they can, the European modes of war and customs of society; China, shaken with the rough hand of civilized war, and moved with a far deeper respect by the approaches of Christian trade and justice, accepting a Western republican to be her general embassador, and seek out for her once celestial empire the advantages of an acknowledged relationship with all the more forward nations. All this by the power of commerce. They feel our shadow cast on their weakness, and their hearts sink within them as if they had seen a people taller than they. For the same reason, too, the false gods are trembling in their seats the world over, and all the strongholds of spiritual delusion shaking to the fall. The sails of commerce are the wings of truth. Wherever it goes—and where does it not?—the power of science, and all that belongs to cultivated manhood, is felt. The universal air becomes filled with new ideas, and man looks out from the prison of darkness in which he has been lying chained and blinded, sees a dawn arising on the world, and feels the morning-breath of truth and liberty.

What we have said, in this general way, of human advancement, as connected with the uses of the sea, involves religious advancement, both as regards knowledge and character. All the advancement, too, of which we have spoken, is, in one view, the work of Christianity; for this it is which has given to Christendom its precedence. And it is precisely the office of the Christian faith that it shall thus elevate and bless mankind; bless them, not in their devotions only, not in their sacraments, or in passing to other worlds, but in every thing that constitutes their mortal life—in society, art, science, wealth, government—all that adorns, elevates, fortifies, and purifies their society. We also perceive that the very tone of Christian piety itself, especially where it is not tempered, as in the United States, by the presence and toleration of all varieties of faith and worship, needs to be modulated and softened by the influence of a general intercourse with mankind; for such is the narrowness of man, that even the love of Christ itself is in perpetual danger of dwindling to a bigot prejudice in the soul; mistaking its mere forms for substance; becoming less generous in its breadth, the more intense it is in degree; and even measuring out the judgment of the world by the thimble in which its own volume and dimensions are cast. The church can never attain to its proper power and beauty till it has become thoroughly catholic in its spirit; a result which is to be continually favored and assisted by the influence of a catholic commerce. In this manner we anticipate a day for man, when commerce itself shall become religious, and religion commercial; when the holy and the useful shall be blended in a common life of brotherhood and duty, comprising all the human kindred of the globe.

The oceans and their commerce have indeed no Christian power in themselves, but they make a contribution to religion of inestimable value, in what they do to prepare a way for the Christian power. They quell the prejudices of the nations, and shame away all confidence in their gods and institutions, and then the Church of God, as the ground is cleared, or being cleared, comes in to fill the chasm that is made, by offering a better faith. What, then, do we see, but that the ocean is becoming the pathway of the Lord? He goes forth among the nations, and their courage dies before him! The islands give up first, the continents must follow! One thing is always sure, either commerce must fold up its sails, and the ocean dry up in its bed (which few will expect), or else every form of idolatry and barbarous worship must cease from the world. This I say apart from all the Christian efforts and instrumentalities supplied by missions; for these are as yet insignificant, compared with those mighty workings of Providence whose path is in the sea. But if these precede, those must follow. As man is a religious being, God will never undertake to rob him of a false religion without giving him a better. Neither can any Christian mind contemplate the rapid and powerful changes which, in our day, have been wrought in the practical position of the heathen nations, without believing that some great design of Providence is on foot, that promises the universal spread of the Christian faith and the spiritual redemption of all the races of mankind. "Lift up thine eyes round about and see, they all gather themselves together, they come unto thee! The abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee!"

The sea has yet another kind of moral and religious use, which is more direct and immediate. The liquid acres of the deep, tossing themselves evermore to the winds, and rolling their mighty anthem round the world, may be even the most valuable and productive acres God has made. Great emotions and devout affections are better fruits than corn, more precious luxuries than wine or oil. And God has built the world with a visible aim to exercise his creatures with whatever is lofty in conception, holy in feeling, and filial in purpose toward himself. All the trials and storms of the land have this same object. To make the soul great, he gives us great dangers to meet, great obstacles to conquer. Deserts, famines, pestilences walking in darkness, regions of cold and wintry snow, hail and tempest—none of these are, in his view, elements of waste and destruction, because they go to fructify the moral man. As related to the moral kingdom of God, they are engines of truth, purity, strength, and all that is great and holy in character. The sea is a productive element of the same class. It is even a great moral educator; and the world, for so many ages patiently enduring, bravely daring, and kept steadily contriving to get the mastery of it, becomes, at last, step by step and slowly, another world; having all courage, and force, and manly science, compacted and close-knit by the stern motherhood of the sea. Meantime, how many here have bowed, who never bowed before, to the tremendous sovereignty of God? How many prayers, otherwise silent, have gone up, to fill the sky and circle the world, from wives and mothers, imploring his protecting presence with husbands and sons they have trusted to the deep? It is of the greatest consequence, too, that such a being as God should have images prepared to express him, and set him before the mind of man in all the grandeur of his attributes. These he has provided in the heavens and the sea, which are the two great images of his vastness and power; the one, remote, addressing itself to cultivated reason and science; the other nigh to mere sense and physically efficient, a liquid symbol of the infinitude of God. It is remarkable, too, how many of the best and most powerful images of God in the Scripture are borrowed from the sea. "Canst thou by searching find out God? The measure thereof is longer than the earth and broader than the sea." "Thy judgments are a great deep." "Which alone spreadeth out the heavens and treadeth upon the waves of the sea." "Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters." "The waters saw thee, O Lord, the waters saw thee; they were afraid, the depths also were troubled!" Every kind of vastness—immensity, infinity, eternity, mystery, omnipotence—has its type in the sea, and there is as much more of God in the world for man to see and feel as the sea can express, and as much more of worship and piety as there is of God.

The sea, then, as we now clearly perceive, is not waste land; no other part of God's territory is more productive. Not too soon, then, did he arrest the subsiding waters of the new creation; for he was contriving, we perceive, not the physical abundance, but the moral benefit and blessing of the world. He did not make the seas too large. He laid them where they should be. He swept their boundaries with his finger in the right place. The floods are mighty, but the Lord is mightier; they lift up their voice, but not too high, to lift the courage and exalt the mastery of man. They have been always, and are more and more visibly to be, the general clearing-house of the trade of the world. They are highways laid for the running to and fro of the great last day of knowledge, and of universal brotherhood complete. No more leviathan only, but God's swift truth, "maketh the deep to boil, and the sea like a pot of ointment." No more a symbol only, it is also the medium, between so many coasts, of God's universal beneficence. He saw, in the beginning, that it was good, and now we see it also; and all kindred and people that dwell upon its shores, and hear it lift up its voice, respond to the anthem it raises to its Author.

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